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THE
POOR SCHOLAR,
FRANK MARTIN AND THE FAIRIES,
THE COUNTRY DANCING MASTER,
AND
OTHER IRISH TALES.

BY WILLIAM CARLETON,
AUTHOR OF "WILLY REILLY," "VALENTINE M'CLUTCHY," "THE BLACK
BARONET," "THE EVIL EYE," ETC., ETC.

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THE POOR SCHOLAR.

ONE day about the middle of November, in the year 18—, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy were digging potatoes on the side of a hard, barren hill, called Esker Dhu. The day was bitter and wintry, the men were thinly clad, and as the keen blast swept across the hill with considerable violence, the sleet-like rain which it bore along, pelted into their garments with pitiless severity. The father had advanced into more than middle age ; and having held, at a rack-rent, the miserable waste of farm which he occupied, he was compelled to exert himself in its cultivation, despite either obduracy of soil, or inclemency of weather. This day, however, was so unusually severe, that the old man began to feel incapable of continuing his toil. The son bore it better ; but whenever a cold rush of stormy rain came over them, both were compelled to stand with their sides against it, and their heads turned, so as that the ear almost rested back upon the shoulder, in order to throw the rain off their faces. Of each, however, that cheek which was exposed to the rain and storm was beaten into a red hue ; whilst the other part of their faces was both pale and hunger-pinched.

The father paused to take breath, and, supported by his spade, looked down upon the sheltered inland which, inhabited chiefly by Protestants and Presbyterians, lay rich and warm-looking under him.

"Why thin," he exclaimed to the son—a lad about fifteen—"sure I know well I oughtn't to curse yer, anyway, you black set ! and yit, the Lord forgive me

my sins, I'm almost timplt to give yez a volley, an' that from my heart out! Look at thim, Jimmy agra—only look at the black thieves! how warm an' wealthy they sit there in our own ould possessions, an' here we must toil till our fingers are worn to the stumps, upon this thievin' bent. The curse of Cromwell on it! You might as well ax the divil for a blessin', as expect anything like a dacent crop out of it. Look at thim two ridges, such a poor sthring o' praties is in it—one here an' one there—an' yit we must turn up the whole ridge for that same! Well, God sind the time soon, when the right will take place, Jimmy agra!"

"An' doesn't Pasthorini say it? Sure whin Twenty-five comes *we'll* have our own agin: the right will overcome the might—the bottomless pit will be locked—and the heretics will be accommodated wid a warm corner; an' yit, faith, there's many o' thim that myself 'ud put in a good word for afther all."

"Throth, an' here's the same, Jimmy. There's Jack Stuart, an' if there's a cool corner in it, the same Jack will get it—an' that he may, I pray, this day. The Lord sind it to him! for he richly desarves it. Kind, neighbourly, and frindly, is he an' all belongin' to him; an' I wouldn't be where a hard word 'ud be spoken of him, nor a dog in connexion wid the family ill thrated; for which rason may he get a cool corner, I humbly sufflicate."

"What do you think of Jack Taylor? Will he be cosey?"

"Throth, I doubt so—a blessed youth is Jack; yit myself 'ud hardly wish it. He's a heerum-skeerum, divil-may-care fellow, no doubt of it, an' laughs at the priests, which same I'm thinkin' will get him below stairs more nor a new-milk heat, any way; but thin, agin, they take all this rollicken in good part, so that it's likely he's not in airnest in it, an' surely they ought to know best, Jimmy."

"What do think of *Yallow Sam*?—*honest Sam*, that they say was born widout a heart, an' carries the

black wool in his ears, to keep out the cries of the widows an' the orphans, that are long rotten in their graves through his dark villany?—He'll get a snug birth!" *

"*Yellow Sam*," replied the old man, slowly, and a dark shade of intense hatred blackened his weather-beaten countenance, as he looked in the direction from which the storm blew: "'twas *he* left us where we're standin', Jimmy—undher this blast, that's cowl'dher an' bittherer nor a step-mother's breath, this cuttin' day! 'Twas *he* turned us on the wide world, whin your poor mother was risin' out of her faver. 'Twas he squenched the hearth, whin she wasn't able to lave the house, till I carried her in my arms into Paddy Cassidy's—the tears fallin' from my eyes upon her face, that I loved next to God. Didnt he give our farm to his bastard son, a purple Orangeman? Out we went, to the winds an' skies of heaven, bekase the rich *bodagh* made intherest aginst us. I tould him whin he chated me out o' my fifteen goolden guineas, that his masther, the landlord, should hear of it; but I could never get next or near him, to make my complaint. Eh?—a snug birth! I'm only afeard that there is no corner in the place below hot enough for him—but lave that to the divil himself; if he doesn't give him the best thratement hell can afford, why I'm not here."

"Divil a one o' the *ould boy's* so bad as they say, father; he gives it to *thim* hot an' heavy, at all evints."

"Why even if he was at a loss about Sam, depind upon it, he'd get a hint from his betthers above, that 'ud be sarviceable."

"They say he visits him as it is, an' that Sam can't sleep widout some one in the room wid him. Dan Philips says the priest was there, an' had a Mass in every room in the house; but Charley Mack tells me

* This was actually said of the person alluded to—a celebrated usurer and agent to two or three estates, who was a little deaf, and had his ears occasionally stuffed with black wool.

there's no truth in it. He was advised to it, he says ; but it seems the ould boy has too strong a houl't of him, for Sam said he'd have him any time sooner nor the priest, and its likest what he would say."

"Och, och, Jimmy, avick, I'm tir'd out ! We had betther give in ; the day's too hard, an' there's no use in standin' agin the weather that's in it. Lave the ould villian to God, who he can't chate, any way."

"Well, may our curse go along wid the rest upon him, for dhrivin' us to sich an unnatural spot as this ! Hot an' heavy, into the sowl an' marrow of him may it penetrate ! An' sure that's no more than all the counthry's wishin' him, whether or not—not to min-tion the curses that's risin' out o' the grave agin him, loud an' piercin' !"

"God knows it's not slavin' yourself on sich a day as this *you'd* be, only for him. Had we kep our farm, you'd be now well an' in your larnin' for a priest—an' there 'ud be one o' the family sure to be a gintleman, any how but that's gone too, agra. Look at the smoke how comfortable it rises from Jack Sullivan's, where the priest has a Station to-day. 'Tisn't fishin' for a sthray pratie *he* is, upon a ridge like this. But it can't be helped ; an' God's will be done ! Not him-self !—faix, it's he that 'll get the height of good thratement. Much good may it do him !—'tis but his right."

The lad now paused in his turn, looked down on Jack Sullivan's comfortable house, sheltered by a clump of trees, and certainly saw such a smoke tossed up from the chimney, as gave unequivocal evidence of preparation for a good dinner. He next looked "be-hind the wind," with a visage made more blank and meagre by the contrast ; after which he reflected for a few minutes, as if working up his mind to some sudden determination. The deliberation, however, was short : he struck his open hand upon the head of the spade with much animation, and instantly took it in both hands, exclaiming :

"*Here, father, here goes ; to the mischief once an'*

for ever I pitch slavery,* and as he spoke, the spade was sent as far from him as he had strength to throw it. An' now, father, wid the help o' God, this is the last day's work I'll ever put my hand to. There's no way of larnin' Latin here; but off to Munster I'll start, an' my face you'll never see in this parish, till I come home either a priest or a gentleman! But that's not all, father dear; I'll rise you out of your distress, or die in the struggle. I can't bear to see your grey hairs in sorrow and poverty."

"Well, Jimmy—well, agra—God enable you, avourneen; 'tis a good intintion; and not a one o' me will turn another spadeful aither, for this day: I'm *dhrookin'* * wid the rain. We'll go home an' take an air o' the fire—we want it; and afterwards we can talk about what you're *on †* for."

It is usual to attribute to the English and Scotch character, exclusively, a cool and persevering energy in the pursuit of such objects as inclination or interest may propose for attainment; whilst Irishmen are considered too much the creatures of impulse to reach a point that requires coolness, condensation of thought, and efforts successively repeated. This is a mistake. It is the opinion of Englishmen and Scotchmen who know not the Irish character thoroughly. The fact is, that in the attainment of an object, where a sad-faced Englishman would despair, an Irishman will, probably, laugh, drink, weep, and fight, during his progress to accomplish it. A Scotchman will miss it, perhaps, but, having done all that could be done, he will try another speculation. The Irishman may miss it too; but to console himself he will break the head of any man that may have impeded him in his efforts, as a proof that he *ought* to have succeeded; or if he cannot manage that point, he will crack the pate of the first man he meets, or he will get drunk, or he will marry a wife, or swear a gauger never to show his face in that quarter again; or he will exclaim, if it be con-

* *Toil—labour.*

† Dripping—very wet.

‡ Determined on.

cerning a farm, with a countenance full of simplicity—"God bless your honour, long life and honour to you Sir! Sure an' 't was but a thrifle, any how, that your Reverence will make up for me another time. An' 'tis well I know your Lordship 'ud be the last man on airth to give me the cowld shoulder, so you would, an' I am an ould residenthur on your own father's estate, the Lord be praised for that same! An' 'tis a happiness, an' nothin' else, so it is, even if I paid double rint—wherein, maybe, I'm not a day's journey from that same, manin' the double rint, yer honour; only that one would do a great deal for the honour an' glory of livin' undher a raal gintleman—an' that's but rason."

There is, in short, a far-sightedness in an Irishman which is not properly understood, because it is difficult to understand it. I do not think there is a nation on earth, whose inhabitants mix up their interest and their feelings together more happily, shrewdly, and yet less ostensibly, than Irishmen contrive to do. An Irishman will make you laugh at his joke, while the object of that joke is wrapped up from you in the profoundest mystery, and you will consequently make the concession to a certain point of his character, which has been really obtained by a faculty you had not penetration to discover, or, rather, which he had too much sagacity to exhibit. Of course, as soon as your back is turned, the broad grin is on him, and one of his cheeks is stuck out two inches beyond the other, because his tongue is in it—at your stupidity, simplicity, or folly. Of all the national characters on this habitable globe, I verily believe that that of the Irish is the most profound and unfathomable; and the most difficult on which to form a system, either social, moral, or religious.

It would be difficult, for example, to produce a more signal instance of energy, system, and perseverance than that exhibited in Ireland during the struggle for Emancipation. Was there not flattery to the *dust? blarney to the eyes? heads broken? throats*

cut? houses burned? and cattle houghed? And why? Was it for the *mere pleasure* of blarney—of breaking heads (I won't dispute the last point, though, because I scorn to give up the glory of the national character)—of cutting throats, burning houses, or houghing cattle? No; but to secure Emancipation. In attaining that object was exemplified the Irish method of gaining a point.

("Yes," said Jemmy, "I will come home able to *rise yez* from your poverty,) or never show my face in the parish of Ballysogarth agin." ✓

When the lad's determination was mentioned to his mother and the family, there was a loud and serious outcry against it; for no circumstance is relished that ever takes away a member from an Irish hearth, no matter what the nature of that circumstance may be.

"Och, thin, is it for that *bocaun** of a boy to set off wid himself, runnin' through the wide world afther larnin', widout money or friends! Avourneen, put it out of yer head. No; struggle on as the rest of us is doin', an' maybe ye'll come as well off at the long run."

"Mother dear," said the son, "I wouldn't wish to go agin what you'd say; but I made a promise to myself to *rise yez* out of your poverty if I can, an' my mind's made up on it; so don't cross me, or be the manes of my havin' bad luck on my journey, in regard of me goin' agin yer will, when yon know 'twould be the last thing I'd wish to do."

"Let the gossoon take his way, Vara. Who knows but it was the Almighty put the thoughts of it into his head. Pasthorini says that there will soon be a change, an' the fat livins will be walkin' back to their ould owners."

"Oh, an' may the Man above grant *that*, I pray Jamini this day! for aren't we harrished out of our lives scrapin' an' scramblin' for the black thieves,

* Soft, innocent person.

what we ought to put on our backs, an' in our own mouths."

When a lad from the humblest classes resolves to go to Munster as poor scholar, there is but one course to be pursued in preparing his outfit. This is by a collection at the chapel among the parishioners, to whom the matter is made known by the priest from the altar, some Sunday previous to his departure. Accordingly, when the family had all given their consent to Jemmy's project, his father went on the following day to communicate the matter to the priest, and to solicit his co-operation in making a collection in behalf of the lad, on the next Sunday but one : for there is always a week's notice given, and sometimes more, that the people may come prepared.

The conversation already detailed between father and son, took place on Friday, and on Saturday, a day on which the priest never holds a Station, and, of course, is generally at home, Dominick M'Evoy went to his house with the object already specified in view. The priest was at home ; a truly benevolent man, but like the worthies of his day, not overburthened with learning, though brimful of kindness and hospitality, mixed up with drollery and simple cunning.

"Good morning, Dominick !" said the priest, as Dominick entered.

"Good morning kindly, Sir," replied Dominick : "I hope your Reverence is well, *and* in good health."

"Troth I am, Dominick ! I hope there's nothing wrong at home : how is the wife and children ?"

"I humbly thank your Reverence for axin' ! Troth there's no rason for complainin' in regard o' the health ; sarra one o' them but 's bravely, consitherin' all things : I believe I'm the worst o' them, myself, yer Reverence I'm gettin' ould, you see, an' stiff, an' wake ; but that's only in the coorse o' nathur ; a man can't last always. Wait till them that's young an' *harty now*, harrows as much as I ploughed in my day, *and they won't have much to brag of.* Why, thin

yer Reverence stands it bravely—faix, wondherfully itself, the Lord be praised! an' it warms my own heart to see you look so well,”

“Thank you, Dominick. Indeed, my health, God be thankied, is very good. Ellish,” he added, calling to an old female servant; “you’ll take a glass, Dominick, the day is cowldish. Ellish, here take the key, and get some spirits—the *poteen*, Ellish—to the right hand in the cupboard. Indeed, my health is very good, Dominick. Father Murray says he invies me my appetite, an’ I tell him he’s guilty of one of the seven deadly sins.”

“Ha, ha, ha! Faix, an’ Invy is one o’ them sure enough; but a joke is a joke in the mane time. A pleasant gintleman is the same Father Murray, but yer Reverence is too deep for him in the jokin’ line, for all that. Ethen, Sir, but it’s you that gave ould Cokely the keen cut about his religion—ha, ha, ha! Myself laughed till I was sick for two days ather it—the ould thief!”

“Eh? Did you hear that, Dominick? Are you sure that’s the *poteen*, Ellish? Ay, an’ the best of it all was, that his pathrun, Lord Foxhunter, was present. Come, Dominick, try that—it never seen wather. But the best of it all was—

“‘Well, Father Kavanagh,’ said he, ‘who put you into the church? Now,’ said he, ‘you’ll come over me wid your regular succession from St. Peter, but I won’t allow that.’

“‘Why, Mr. Cokely,’ said I, back to him, ‘I’ll give up the succession,’ says I; ‘and what is more, I’ll grant that *you* have been *called* by the Lord, and that *I* have *not*; but the Lord that called you,’ says I, ‘*was Lord Foxhunter*.’ Man, you’d tie his Lordship *wid* a cobweb, he laughed so heartily.”

“‘Bravo, Father Kavanagh,’ said he. ‘Cokely, you’re *bate*,’ said he; ‘and upon my honour, you must both dine with me to-day,’ says he—and capital claret he keeps.”

“*Your health*, Father Kavanagh, an’ God spare you

to us! Hah! wather! Oh, the divil a taste itself did the same stuff *see*! Why, thin, I think your Reverence an' me's about an age. I bleeve I'm a thrifle oulder; but I don't bear it so well as you do. The family, you see, an' the childhre, an' the cares o' the world, pull me down; throth, the same family's a throuble to me. I wish I had them all settled safe, any way."

"What do you intind to do with them, Dominick?"

"In throth, that's what brought me to yer Reverence. I've one boy—Jimmy—a smart chap entirely, an' he has taken it into his head to go as a poor scholar to Munster. He's fond o' the larnin' there's not a doubt o' that, an' small blame to him to be sure; but then again, what can I do? He's bint on goin', an' I'm not able to help him, poor fellow, in any shape; so I made bould to see your Reverence about it, in hopes that you might be able to plan out something for him more betther nor I could do. I have the good wishes of the neighbours, and indeed of the whole parish, let the thing go as it may."

"I know that, Dominick, and for the same rason (we'll have a collection at the three althars.) I'll min-tion it to them afther Mass to-morrow, and let them be prepared for Sunday week, when we can make the collection. Hut, man, never fear; we'll get as much as will send him halfway to the priesthood; and I'll tell you what, Dominick, I'll never be the man to refuse giving him a couple of guineas myself."

"May the heavenly Father bless an' keep your Reverence. I'm sure 'tis a good right the boy has, as well as all of us, to never forget your kindness. But as to the money—he'll be proud of your assistance the other way, Sir—so not a penny—'tis only your goodwill we want—hem—except indeed, that you'd wish yourself to make a piece of kindness of it to the poor boy. Oh, not a drop more, Sir—I declare it'll be apt to get into my head. Well, well—sure an' we're not to disobey our clargy, whether or not; so here's your

health over agin, your Reverence ! an' success to the poor child that's bint on good !"

"Two guineas his Reverence is to give you from himself, Jimmy," said the father, on relating the success of this interview with the priest ; an' faix I was widin one of refusin' it for feard it might bring something *unlucky* * wid it ; but, thought I, on the spur, it's best to take it, any way. We can aisly put it off on some o' these black-mouthed (Presbyterians or Orangemen) by way of changin' it, an' if there's any hard fortune in it, let them have the full benefit of it, *ershi misha*."†

It is by trifles of this nature that the unreasonable though enduring hatred with which the religious sects of Ireland look upon those of a different creed is best known. This feeling, however, is sufficiently mutual. Yet on both sides there is something more speculative than practical in its nature. When they speak of each other as a distinct class, the animosity, though abstracted, appears to be most deep ; but when they mingle in the necessary intercourse of life, it is curious to see them frequently descend, on both sides, from the general rule to those exceptions of good-will and kindness, which natural benevolence and mutual obligation, together with a correct knowledge of each other's real characters, frequently produce. Even this abstracted hatred, however, has been the curse of our unhappy country ; it has kept us too much asunder, or when we met, exhibited us to each other in our darkest and most offensive aspects.

Dominick's conduct in the matter of the priest's money was also a happy illustration of that mixture of simplicity and shrewdness with which an Irishman can frequently make points meet, which superstition, alone, without such ingenuity, would keep separate for ever. Many another man might have refused the money from

* There is a superstitious belief in some parts of Ireland, that priest's money is unlucky.

† Say J.

an ignorant dread of its proving *unlucky* ; but his mode of reasoning on the subject was satisfactory to himself, and certainly the most ingenious which, according to his belief, he could have adopted—that of foisting it upon a heretic.

The eloquence of a country priest is well adapted to the end in view, to the feelings of his auditory, and to the nature of the subject on which he speaks. Pathos and humour are the two levers by which the Irish character is raised or depressed ; and these are blended in a manner too anomalous to be ever properly described.

On the Sunday in question, as the subject could not be called strictly religious, the priest, who knew that a joke or two would bring in many an additional crown to Jemmy's *caubeen**, was determined that they should at least have a laugh for their money. The man, besides, was benevolent, and knew the way to the Irish heart ; a knowledge which he felt happy in turning to the benefit of the lad in question.

With this object in view, he addressed the people somewhat in the following language :

“ *Blessed is he that giveth his money to him that standeth in need of it.*

“ These words, my bretheren, are taken from St. Paul, who, among ourselves, knew the value of a friend in distress as well as any other apostle in the three kingdoms—hem. It's a nate text, my friends, anyhow. He manes, however, when we have it to give, my own true, well-tryed, ould friends !—when we have it to give. Its absence althers the case, in toto ; because you have all heard the proverb—‘there is no takin’ money out of an empty purse.’

“ He that carries an empty purse may fwistle at the thief. It's *sing* in the Latin ; but sing or fwistle, in my opinion, he that goes wid an empty purse seldom sings or fwistles to a pleasant tune. Melancholy

* Such collections were generally made in hats—the usual name for an Irish peasant's hat being *caubeen*.

music I'd call it, and may be I wouldn't be much astray afther—hem. At all evints, may none of this present congregation, whin at their devotions, ever sing or fwistle to the same tune! No; let it be to 'money in both pockets,' if you sing at all; and as long as you have that, never fear but you'll also have the 'priest in his boots' into the bargain—for well I know that you're the high-spirited people, who wouldn't see your priest without them, while a fat parson, with half-a-dozen chins upon him, red and rosy, goes about every day in the week bogged in boots, like a horse-trooper!

"But suppose a man hasn't money, what is he to do? Now this divides itself into what is called Hydrostatics an' Metaphuysics, and must be proved logically in the following manner:

"First, we suppose him *not* to have the money—there I may be wrong or I may be right; now for the illustration and the logic.

"Pether Donovan."

"Here, your Reverence."

"Now, Pether, if I suppose you to have *no* money, am I right, or am I wrong?"

"Why, thin, I'd be sarry to prove your Reverence to be wrong, so I would; but, for all that, I believe I must give it aginst you."

"How much have you got, Pether?"

"Ethen, but 'tis your Reverence that's comin' close upon me; two or three small notes an' some silver."

"How much silver, Pether?"

"I'll tell your Reverence in a jiffy. I ought to have a ten shillin', barrin' the price of a quarther o' tobaccy that I bought at the crass-roads beyant. Nine shillins an' some hapuns, yer Reverence."

"Very good, Pether, you must hand me the silver, till I give the rest of the illustration wid it."

"But does yer Reverence mind another ould proverb?—'a fool an' his money's asy parted.' Sure an' I know you're goin' to do a joke upon me."

("Give him the money, Pether," from a hundred voices—"give his Reverence the money, you nagur you—give him the silver, you dirty spalpeen you—hand it out, you misert.")

"Pether, if you don't give it dacently, I'll not take it at all."

"Here, here, your Reverence—here it is; sure I wouldn't have your ill-will for all I'm worth."

"Why, you nagur, if I wasn't the first orathor livin', barin' Cicero or Demosthenes himself, I couldn't *schrew* a penny out o' you! Now, Pether, there's a specimen of logic for you; an' if it wasn't good, depind upon it the money would be in your pocket still. I've never known you to give a penny for any charitable purpose, since ever I saw your face: but I'm doin' a good action in your behalf for once; so if you have any movin' words to say to the money in question, say them, for you'll never finger it more."

A burst of the most uproarious mirth followed this manœuvre, in which the simple priest himself joined heartily, whilst the melancholy of Peter's face was ludicrously contrasted with the glee which characterised those that surrounded him.

"Secondly—A man, you see, may have money, or he may not, when his fellow-creature who stands in need of it makes an appale to his dacency and his feelings; and sorry I'd be to think that there's a man before me, or a woman either, who'd refuse to assist the distresses of any one, of any creed, church, or persuasion, whether white, black, or yallow—no; I don't except even the bluebellies themselves. It's what I never taught you, nor never will tache you to the day of my death. To be sure, a fellow-creature may say, 'help me, my brother, I am distressed,' or, 'I am bent on a good purpose, that your kindness can enable me to accomplish.' But suppose that you have not the money about you at the time, wouldn't you feel sorry to the back bone? Ay, would yez—to the very core of the heart itself. Or if any man—an' he'd be nothing else than a *bodagh* that would say it—if any man would tell me

that you would not, I'd—yes—I'd give him his answer, as good as I gave to ould Cokely long ago, and you all know what that was.

“The next point is, what would you do if you hadn't it about you? It's I that can tell you what you'd do :—you'd say, ‘I haven't got it, brother,’—for ev'ry created bein' of the human kind is your brother, barrin' the women, an' they are your sisters; ‘but,’ says you, ‘if you wait a bit for a day or two, or a week, or maybe for a fortnight, I'll try what I can do to help you.’

“Picture to yourselves a fellow-creature in distress—suppose him to have neither hat, shoe, nor stocking—[this was a touch of the pathetic]—and altogether in a state of utter destitution! Can there be a more melancholy picture than this? No there can't. But 'tisn't the tithe of it!—a barefaced robbery is the same tithe—think of him without father, mother, or friend upon the earth—both dead, and ne'er another to be had for love or money—maybe he has poor health—maybe he's sick, an' in a strange country—[here Jemmy's mother and friends sobbed aloud, and the contagion began to spread—the priest, in fact, knew where to touch]—his face is pale—his eyes sunk with sickness and sorrow in his head—his bones are cuttin' the skin—he knows not where to turn himself—hunger and sickness are strivin' for him.—[Here the grief became loud and general, and even the good-natured preacher's own voice got somewhat unsteady.]—He's in a bad state entirely—miserable! more miserable!! most miserable!!! sick, sore, and sorry! he's to be pitied, felt for, and compassionated! 'tis a faver he has, or an ague, maybe, or a rheumatism, or an embargo* on the limbs, or the king's evil, or a consumption, or a decline, or God knows but it's the falling-sickness—[och, och, oh!—och, och, oh! from the whole congregation, whilst the simple old man's eyes were blinded with tears at the force of the picture he drew.]—Ay, maybe it's the *falling*-sickness, and in that case how on earth can he *stand* it. The Lord in heaven look down upon him, with miseracordial feeling

* Lumbago we presume.

and benediction ! He hasn't a rap in his company !—moneyless, friendless, houseless, an' homeless ! Ay, my friends, you all have homes ; but *he* has none ! Thrust back by every hard-hearted spalpeen, and he, maybe, a better father's son than the Turk that refuses him ! Look at your own childre, my friends ! Bring the case home to yourselves ! Suppose he was one of them—alone on the earth, and none to pity him in his sorrows. Your own childre, I say, in a strange land. [Here the outcry became astounding ; men, women, and children in one general uproar of grief.] An' this may all be Jemmy M'Evoy's case, that's going in a week or two to Munster, as a poor shcolar, may be his case, I say, except you befriend him, and show your *dacency* and your *feelings*, like Christians and Catholics ; and for either dacency or kindness, I'd turn yez against any other congregation in the diocese, or in the kingdom—ay, or against Dublin itself, if it was convanient, or in the neighbourhood."

Now here was a *coup de main*—not a syllable mentioned about Jemmy M'Evoy, until he had melted them down, ready for the impression, which he accordingly made to his heart's content.

"Ay," he went on, "an' 'tis the parish of Ballyso-garth that has the name, far and near, for *both*, and well they deserve it. (You won't see the poor gorsoon go to a strange country with empty pockets.) He's the son of an honest man—one of yourselves ; and although he's a poor man, you know 'twas *Yellow Sam* that made him so—that put him out of his comfortable farm and slipped a *blackmouth** into it. You won't turn your backs on the son in regard of *that*, any way. For Sam, let *him* pass ; he'll not grind the poor nor truckle to the rich, when he gives up his stewardship in the kingdom come. Lave him to the friend of the poor—to his God ; but the son of them that he oppressed, you will stand up for. He's going to Munster, to learn 'to go upon the Mission ;' and, on Sunday next, there will be a collection made here, and at the *other two althars* for him ; and, as your own characters

➤ *In the north of Ireland the word *blackmouth* means a Presbyterian.

are at stake, I trust it will be neither mane nor shabby. There will be Protestants here, I'll engage, and you must act dacently before them, if it was only to set them a good example."

We do not give this as a specimen of their *modern* pulpit eloquence, but as a sample of that in which some of those Irish clergy shone, who, before the establishment of Maynooth, were admitted to orders immediately from the hedge-schools, in consequence of the dearth of priests which then existed in Ireland. It was customary in those days to ordain them even before they departed for the continental colleges, in order that they might, by saying masses and performing other clerical duties, be enabled to add something to the scanty pittance, which was appropriated to their support. Of the class to which Father Kavanagh belonged, there are few, if any, remaining.*

On the Sunday following, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy attended mass, whilst the other members of the family, with that sense of honest pride which is more strongly inherent in Irish character than is generally supposed, remained at home, from a reluctance to witness what they could not but consider a degradation. This decency of feeling was anticipated by the priest, and not overlooked by the people; for the former, the reader may have observed, in the whole course of his address never once mentioned the word "charity;" nor did the latter permit the circumstance to go without its reward, according to the best of their ability. So keen and delicate are the perceptions of the Irish, and so acutely alive are they to those nice distinctions of kindness and courtesy, which have in their hearts a spontaneous and sturdy growth, that mocks at the stunted virtues of artificial life.

In the parish of Ballysogarth there were three altars or places of Roman Catholic worship; and the reader may suppose that the collection made at each place

* Written in 1830.

was considerable. In truth, both father and son's anticipations were far under the sum collected. Protestants and Presbyterians attended with their contributions, and those of the latter who scrupled to be present at what they considered to be an idolatrous worship, did not hesitate to *send* their quota by some Roman Catholic neighbour.

Their names were accordingly announced with an encomium from the priest, which never failed to excite a warm-hearted murmur of approbation. Nor was this feeling transient, for, we will venture to say, that had political excitement flamed up even to rebellion and mutual slaughter, the persons and property of *those* individuals would have been held sacred.

At length Jemmy was equipped ; and sad and heavy became the hearts of his parents and immediate relations as the morning appointed for his departure drew nigh. On the evening before, several of his more distant relatives came to take their farewell of him, and, in compliance with the usages of Irish hospitality, they were detained for the night. They did not, however, come empty-handed : some brought money ; some brought linen, stockings, or small presents—"jist, Jimmy asthore, to keep *me* in your memory, sure,—and nothin' else it is for, mavourneen."

Except Jemmy himself, and one of his brothers who was to accompany him part of the way, none of the family slept. The mother exhibited deep sorrow, and Dominick, although he made a show of firmness, felt, now that the crisis was at hand, nearly incapable of parting with the boy. The conversation of their friends and the cheering effects of the poteen, enabled them to sustain his loss better than they otherwise would have done, and the hope of seeing him one day "an ordained priest," contributed more than either to support them.

When the night was nearly half spent, the mother took a candle and privately withdrew to the room in which the boy slept. The youth was fair and interesting to look upon—the clustering locks of his white

forehead were divided : yet there was on his otherwise open brow, a shade of sorrow, produced by the coming separation, which even sleep could not efface. The mother held the candle gently towards his face, shading it with one hand, lest the light might suddenly awake him ; she then surveyed his features long and affectionately, whilst the tears fell in showers from her cheeks.

"There you lie," she softly sobbed out, in Irish, "the sweet pulse of my heart ; the flower of our flock, the pride of our eyes, and the music of our hearth ! Jimmy, avourneen machree, an' how can I part wid you, my darlin' son ! Sure, when I look at your mild face, and think that your takin' the world on your head to *rise* us out of our poverty, isn't my heart brakin' ! A lonely house we'll have afther you, acushla ! Go in' out and comin' in, at home or abroad, your voice won't be in my ears, nor your eye smilin' upon me. An' thin to think of what you may suffer in a strange land ! If your head aches, on what tender breast will it lie ? or who will bind the ribbon of comfort round it ? or wipe your fair mild brow in sickness ? Oh, Blessed Mother !—hunger, sickness, and sorrow may come upon you *when you'll be far from your own, an' from them that loves you !*"

This melancholy picture was too much for the tenderness of the mother ; she sat down beside the bed, rested her face on her open hand, and wept in subdued but bitter grief. At this moment his father, who probably suspected the cause of her absence, came in and perceived her distress.

"Vara," said he, in Irish also, "is my darlin' son asleep ?"

She looked up, with streaming eyes, as he spoke, and replied to him in a manner so exquisitely affecting, when the circumstances of the boy, and the tender allusion made by the sorrowing mother, are considered—that in point of fact no heart—certainly no Irish heart—could withstand it. There is an old Irish melody unsurpassed in pathos, simplicity, and beauty—named

in Irish "Tha ma machulla's na foscail me,"—or in English, "I am asleep, and don't waken me." The position of the boy caused the recollection of the old melody to flash into the mother's heart,—she simply pointed to him as the words streamed in a low melodious murmur, but one full of heart-rending sorrow from her lips. The old sacred association—for it was one which she had sung for him a thousand times,—until warned to desist by his tears—deepened the tenderness of her heart, and she said with difficulty, whilst she involuntarily held over the candle to gratify the father's heart by a sight of him.

"I was keepin' him before my eye," she said; "God knows but it may be the last night we'll ever see him undher our own roof! Dominick, achora, I doubt I can't part wid him from my heart."

"Then how can I, Vara?" he replied. "Wasn't he my right hand in everything? When was he from me, ever since he took a man's work upon him? And when he'd finish his own task for the day, how kindly he'd begin an' help me wid mine! No, Vara, it goes to my heart to let him go away upon sich a plan, and I wish he hadn't taken the notion into his head at all."

"It's not too late, maybe," replied his mother: "I think it wouldn't be hard to put him off of it; the crathur's own heart is failin' him to lave us. He has sorrow upon his face where he lies."

The father looked at the expression of affectionate melancholy which shaded his features as he slept; and the perception of the boy's internal struggle against his own domestic attachments in accomplishing his first determination, powerfully touched his heart.

"Vara," said he, "I know the boy—he won't give it up; and 't would be a pity—maybe a sin—to put him from it. Let the child get fair play, and thry his coorse. If he fails, he can come back to us, an' our arms an' hearts will be open to welcome him! But, if God prospers him, wouldn't it be a blessin' that we never expected, to see him in the white robes, *celebratin' one mass* for his paarents. If these ould eyes

could see that, I would be continted to close them in pace an' happiness for ever."

"An' well you'd become them, avourneen machree ! Well would your mild and handsome countenance look wid the long heavenly stole of innocence upon you ! and although it's atin' into my heart, I'll bear it for the sake of seein' the same blessed sight. Look at that face, Dominick ; mightn't many a lord of the land be proud to have sich a son ? May the heavens shower down its blessin' upon him !"

The father burst into tears. "It is—it is !" said he. "It is the face that 'ud make many a noble heart proud to look at it ! Is it any wondher it 'ud cut *our* hearts, thin, to have it taken from afore our eyes ? Come away, Vara, come away, or I'll not be able to part wid it. It *is* the lovely face—an' kind is the heart of my darlin' child !" As he spoke, he stooped down and kissed the youth's cheek, on which the warm tears of affection fell, soft as the dew from heaven. The mother followed his example, and they both left the room.

"We must bear it," said Dominick, as they passed into another apartment ; "the money's gathered, an' it wouldn't look well to be goin' back wid it to them that befriended us. *We'd* have the blush upon our face for it, an' the child no advantage."

"Thru for you, Dominick ; and we must make up our minds to live widout him for a while."

The following morning was dark and cloudy, but calm and without rain. When the family were all assembled, every member of it evinced traces of deep feeling, and every eye was fixed upon the serene but melancholy countenance of the boy with tenderness and sorrow. He himself maintained a quiet equanimity, which, though apparently liable to be broken by the struggles of domestic affection, and in character with his meek and unassuming disposition, yet was supported by more firmness than might be expected from a mind in which kindness and sensibility were so strongly predominant. At this time, however, his character was not developed, or at least not understood.

by those that surrounded him. To strong feelings and enduring affections, he added a keenness of perception and a bitterness of invective, of which, in his conversation with his father concerning Yellow Sam, the reader has already had sufficient proofs. At breakfast little or nothing was eaten; the boy himself could not taste a morsel, nor any other person in the family. When the form of the meal was over, the father knelt down—"It's right," said he, "that we should all go to our knees, and join in a Rosary in behalf of the child that's goin' on a good intintion. He won't thrive the worse bekase the last words that he'll hear from his father and mother's lips is a prayer for bringin' the blessin' of God down upon his endayvours."

This was accordingly performed, though not without tears and sobs, and frequent demonstrations of grief; for religion among the peasantry is often associated with bursts of deep and powerful feeling.

When the prayer was over, the boy rose and calmly strapped to his back a satchel covered with deer-skin, containing a few books, linen, and a change of very plain apparel. While engaged in this, the uproar of grief in the house was perfectly heart-rending. When just ready to set out, he reverently took off his hat, knelt down, and with tears streaming from his eyes, craved humbly and meekly the blessing and forgiveness of his father and mother. The mother caught him in her arms, kissed his lips, and kneeling also, sobbed out a fervent benediction upon his head; the father now, in the grief of a strong man, pressed him to his heart, until the big burning tears fell upon the boy's face; his brothers and sisters embraced him wildly; next his more distant relations; and lastly, the neighbours who were crowded about the door. After this he took a light staff in his hand, and, first blessing himself after the form of his church, proceeded to a strange land in quest of education.

He had not gone more than a few perches from the door, when his mother followed him with a small bottle of holy water. "Jimmy, a *lanna voght*,"* said

* My poor child.

she, "here's this, an' carry it about you—it will keep evil from you ; an' be sure to take good care of the written correckther you got from the priest an' Square Benson ; an', darlin', don't be lookin' too often at the cuff o' your coat, for feard the people might get a notion that you have the bank notes sewed in it. An', Jimmy agra, don't be too lavish upon their Munster crame, they say it's apt to give people the ague. Kiss me agin, agra ; an' the heavens above keep you safe and well till we see you once more !"

She then tenderly, and still with melancholy pride, settled his shirt collar, which she thought did not sit well about his neck : and kissing him again, with renewed sorrow left him to pursue his journey.

M'Evoy's house was situated on the side of a dark hill—one of that barren description which can be called neither inland nor mountain. It commanded a wide and extended prospect, and the road along which the lad travelled was visible for a considerable distance from it. On a small hillock before the door, sat Dominick and his wife, who, as long as their son was visible, kept their eyes, which were nearly blinded with tears, rivetted upon his person. It was now they gave full vent to their grief, and discussed with painful and melancholy satisfaction, all the excellent qualities which he possessed. As James himself advanced, one neighbour after another fell away from the train which accompanied him, not, however, until they had affectionately embraced and bid him adieu, and, perhaps, slipped with peculiar delicacy an additional mite into his waistcoat pocket. After the neighbours, then followed the gradual separation from his friends—one by one left him, as in the great journey of life, and in a few hours he found himself accompanied only by his favourite brother.

This to him was the greatest trial he had yet felt ; long and heart-rending was their embrace. Jemmy soothed and comforted his beloved brother, but in vain. The lad threw himself on the spot at which they parted, and remained there until Jemmy turned

an angle of the road which brought him out of his sight, when the poor boy kissed the marks of his brother's feet repeatedly, and then returned home, hoarse and broken down with the violence of his grief.

He was now alone, and for the first time, felt keenly the strange object on which he was bent, together with all the difficulties connected with its attainment. He was young and uneducated, and many years, he knew, must elapse e'er he could find himself in possession of his wishes. But time would pass at home, as well as abroad, he thought ; and as there lay no impediment of peculiar difficulty in his way, he collected all his firmness and proceeded.

There is no country on the earth in which either education, or the desire to procure it, is so much revered as in Ireland. Next to the claims of the priest and schoolmaster come those of the poor scholar for the respect of the people. It matters not how poor or how miserable he may be ; so long as they see him struggling with poverty in the prosecution of a purpose so laudable, they will treat him with attention and kindness. Here there is no danger of his being sent to the workhouse, committed as a vagrant—or passed from parish to parish, until he reaches his own settlement. Here the humble lad is not met by the sneer of purse-proud insolence, or his simple tale answered only by the frown of heartless contempt. No—no—no. The best bit and sup are placed before him ; and whilst his poor, but warm-hearted entertainer can afford only potatoes and salt to his own half-starved family, he will make a struggle to procure something better for the poor scholar ; “ *Bekase he's far from his own, the crathur !* An' sure the intintion in him is good, any how ; the Lord prosper him, an' every one that has the heart set upon the larnin' ! ”

As Jemmy proceeded, he found that his satchel of books and apparel gave as clear an intimation of his purpose, as if he had carried a label to that effect upon his back.

"God save you, a bouchal!" said a (warm, honest-looking countryman), whom he met driving home his cows in the evening, within a few miles of the town in which he purposed to sleep. ✓

"God save you kindly!"

"Why, thin, 'tis a long journey you have before you, alanna, for I know well it's for Munster you're bound."

"Thru for you, 'tis there wid the help of God I'm goin'. (A great scarcity of larnin' was in my own place, or I wouldn't have to go at all.)" said the boy, whilst his eyes filled with tears. ^ ~ 16

"'Tis no discredit in life," replied the countryman, with untaught natural delicacy, for he perceived that a sense of pride lingered about the boy, which made the character of poor scholar sit painfully upon him; "'tis no discredit, dear, nor don't be cast down. I'll warrant you that God will prosper you; an' that he may avick, I pray this day!" and as he spoke, he raised his hat in reverence to the Being whom he invoked. "An' tell me, dear—where do you intend to sleep to-night?"

"In the town forrid here," replied Jemmy. "I'm in hopes I'll be able to reach it before dark."

"Phoo! asy you will. Have you any friends or acquaintances there that 'ud welcome you, a bouchal dhas (my handsome boy)?"

"No, indeed," said Jemmy, "they're all strangers to me; but I can stop in 'dhry lodgins', for it's chaper."

"Well, alanna, I believe you; but *I'm no stranger to you*—so come home wid me to-night; where you'll get a good bed, an betther thratement nor in any of their dhry lodgins. Give me your books, an' I'll carry them for you. Ethen, but you have a great batch o' them entirely. Can you make any hand o' the Latin at all yet?"

"No, indeed," replied Jemmy, somewhat sorrowfully; "I didn't ever open a Latin book, at all at all."

"Well, acushla, everything has a beginnin';—you won't be so. An' I know by your face that you'll be

bright at it, an' a credit to them that owes* you. There's my house in the fields beyant, where you'll be well kept for one night, any way, or for twinty, or for ten times twinty, if you wanted them."

The honest farmer then commenced the song of *Colleen dhas Crotha na Mho†*, which he sang in a clear mellow voice, until they reached the house.

"Alley," said the man to his wife on entering, "here's a stranger I've brought you."

"Well," replied Alley, "he's welcome sure, any way; *Kead millia failta ghud*, alanna! sit over to the fire. Brian, get up, dear," said she to one of the children, "an' let the stranger to the hob."

"He's goin' on a good errand, the Lord bless him!" said the husband, "up the country for the larnin'. Put thim books over on the settle; an' whin the *girshas* are done milkin', give him a brave dhrink of the sweet milk; it's the stuff to thravel on."

"Throth, an' I will, wid a heart an' a half, wishing it was betther I had to give him. Here, Nelly, put down a pot o' wather, an' lave soap an' a *praskeen*, afore you go to milk, till I bathe the decent boy's feet. Sore an' tired they are afther his journey, poor young crathur."

When Jemmy placed himself upon the hob, he saw that some peculiarly good fortune had conducted him to so comfortable a resting-place. He considered this as a good omen, and felt, in fact, much relieved, for the sense of loneliness among strangers was removed.

The house evidently belonged to a wealthy farmer, well to do in the world; the chimney was studded with sides upon sides of yellow smoke-dried bacon, hams, and hung beef in abundance. The kitchen tables were large, and white as milk; and the dresser rich in its shining array of delf and pewter. Everything, in fact, was upon a large scale. Huge meal chests were ranged on one side, and two or three settle beds on the other, conspicuous, as I have said,

* *Ozus*.

† The pretty girl milking her cow.

for their uncommon cleanliness; whilst hung from the ceiling were the *glaiks*, a machine for churning; and beside the dresser stood an immense churn, certainly too unwieldy to be managed except by machinery. The farmer was a ruddy-faced Milesian, who wore a drab frieze coat, with a velvet collar, buff waistcoat, corduroy small-clothes, and top-boots well greased from the tops down.* He was not only an agriculturist, but a grazier—remarkable for shrewdness and good sense, generally attended fairs and markets, and brought three or four large droves of fat cattle to England every year. From his fob hung the brass chain and almost rusty key of a watch, which he kept certainly more for use than ornament.

"A little sup o' this," said he, "won't take your life," approaching Jemmy with a bottle of as good poteen as ever escaped the eye of an exciseman; "it'll refresh you—for you're tired, or I wouldn't offer it, by rason that one bint on what you're bint on, oughtn't to be makin' freedoms wid the same dhrink. But there's a time for everything, an' there's a time for this.—Thank you, agra," he added, in reply to Jemmy, who had drunk his health. "Now, don't be frettin'—but make yourself as aisy as if you were at your own father's hearth. You'll have everything to your heart's contint for this night; the carts are goin' in to the market to-morrow airly—you can sit upon them, an' maybe you'll get somethin' more nor you expect: sure the Lord has given it to me, an' why wouldn't I share it wid them that wants it more nor I do?"

The lad's heart yearned to the generous farmer, for he felt that his kindness had the stamp of truth and sincerity upon it. He could only raise his eyes in a silent prayer, that none belonging to him might ever be compelled, as strangers and way-farers, to commit themselves, as he did, to the casualties of life, in pursuit of those attainments which poverty cannot other-

* This, almost in every instance, is the dress of a wealthy Irish farmer.

wise command. Fervent, indeed, was his prayer; and certain we are, that because it was sincere, it must have been heard.

In the meantime, the good woman, or *vanithee*, had got the pot of water warmed, in which Jemmy was made to put his feet. She then stripped up her arms to the elbows, and, with soap and seedy meal, affectionately bathed his legs and feet: then, taking the praskeen, or coarse towel, she wiped them with a kindness which thrilled to his heart.

"And now," said she, "I must give you a cure for blisters, an' it's this:—In the mornin', if we're all spared, as we will, plase the Almighty, I'll give you a needle an' some white woollen thread, well soaped. When your blisters gets up, dhraw the soapy thread through them, clip it on each side, an' my life for yours, they won't trouble you. Sure I thried it the year I went on my Station to Lough Derg, an' I know it to be the rale cure."

"Here, Nelly," said the farmer,—who sat with a placid benevolent face, smoking his pipe on the opposite hob—to one of the maids who came in from milking,—“bring up a noggin of that milk, we want it here: let it be none of your washy *foremilk*, but the *strip-pins*, Nelly, that has the strinth in it. Up wid it here, a Colleen."

"The never a one o' the man but's doatin' down-right, so he is," observed the wife, "to go to fill the tired child's stomach wid plash. Can't you wait till he ates a thrifle o' somethin' stout, to keep life in him, after his hard journey? Does your feet feel themselves cool and asy now, a hatur?"

"Indeed," said Jemmy, "I'm almost as fresh as when I set out. 'Twas little thought I had, when I came away this mornin', that I'd meet wid so much friendship on my journey. I hope it's a sign that God's on my side in my undertakin'!"

"I hope so, avourneen—I hope so, an' it is too," replied the farmer, taking the pipe out of his mouth, and mildly whiffing away the smoke, "an' God'll be

always on your side, as long as your intentions are good. Now ate somethin'—you must want it by this ; an' thin, when you rest yourself bravely, take a tass into a good feather-bed, where you can sleep rings round you.* Who knows but you'll be able to say mass for me or some of my family yit. God grant that, any way, avick !"

Poor James's heart was too full to eat much ; he took, therefore, only a very slender portion of the refreshments set before him ; but his hospitable entertainer had no notion of permitting him to use the free exercise of his discretion on this important point. When James put away the knife and fork, as an indication of his having concluded the meal, the farmer and his wife turned about, both at the same moment, with a kind of astonishment—

"Eh ? is it givin' over that way you are ? Why, a lanna, it's nothin' at all you've tuck ; sure little Brian there would make a fool of you, so he would, at the atin'. Come, come, a bouchal—don't be ashamed, or make any way sthrange at all, but ate hearty."

"I declare I *have* ate heartily, thank you," replied James ; "oceans itself, so I did. I couldn't swally a bit more if the house was full."

"Arrah, Brian," said the wife, "cut him up more o' that hung beef, it's asham'd the crathur is ! Take it, avick ; don't we know the journey you had ? Faix, if one o' the boys was out on a day's thravellin', you'd see how he'd handle himself."

"Indeed," said James, "I can't—if I could I would. Sure I would be no way backward at all, so I wouldn't."

"Troth, an' you can an' must," said the farmer : "the never a rise you'll rise, till you finish that"—putting over a complement out of all reasonable proportion with his age and size.

"There now's a small taste, an' you must finish it. To go to ate nothin' at all ! Hut tut ! by the tops o'

* As much as you please

my boots, you must put that clear an' clane (sight, or I'll go mad an' burn them."

The lad recommenced, and continued to eat as he could possibly hold out; at length he ceased.

"I can't go on," said he; "don't ax me: I indeed."

"Bad manners to the word I'll hear till you it: you know it's but a thrifle to spake of. agin, avick, but take your time; you'll be able to do it."

The poor lad's heart was engaged on other thoughts and other scenes; his home, and its beloved inmates—sorrow, and the gush of young affections, were to burst forth.

"I cannot ate," said he, and he looked imploring on the farmer and his wife, whilst the tears started in his eyes—"don't ax me, for my heart's wid them behind me, that I may never see agin;" and he burst in a burst of grief which he could not restrain.

Neither the strength nor tenderness of the lad's affection was unappreciated by this excellent couple. In a moment the farmer's wife was also in tears, and did her husband break the silence for some minutes.

"The Almighty pity and strengthen him!" said the farmer's wife, "but he has the good an' the kind heart, an' would be a credit to any family—we won't ax you to ate—no indeed. It was a kindness we did it: don't be cast down aither; it isn't the ocean you're crossin'; but goin' from one county like to another. God 'ill guard an' take care o' you, so he will. Your intintion's good, and prosper it."

"He will avick," said the farmer himself—"he cheer up, my good boy! I know thim that's like an' creditable clargy this day, that went as you're—ay, an' that ris an' helped their parents, an' put them above poverty an' distress; and never fear, v' blessin', but you'll do the same."

"That's what brings me at all," replied the lad, *drying his tears*; "if I was once able to take

out o' their distress, I'd be happy : only I'm afeard the cares o' the world will break my father's heart before I have it in my power to assist him."

"No such thing, darlin'," said the good woman. "Sure his hopes out o' you, an' his love for you, will keep him up ; an' you dunna but God may give him a blessin' too, avick."

"Mix another sup o' that for him," said the farmer : "he's low spirited, and it's too strong to give him any more of it as it is. Childhre, where's the masther from us—eh? Why, thin, God help them, the crathurs—wasn't it *thoughtful** o' them to lave the place while he was at his dinner, for fraid he'd be dashed—manin' them young crathurs, Alley. But can you tell us where the 'masther' is? Isn't this his night wid us? I know he tuck his dinner here."

"Ay did he ; but it's up to Lary Murphy's he's gone, to thry his son in his book-keepin'. Mavrone, but he had time enough to put him well through it afore this, any way."

As she spoke, a short thickset man, with black twinkling eyes and ruddy cheeks entered. This personage was no other than the schoolmaster of that district, who circulated, like a newspaper, from one farmer's house to another, in order to expound for his kind entertainers the news of the day, his own learning, and the very evident extent of their ignorance.

The moment he came in, the farmer and his wife rose with an air of much deference, and placed a chair for him exactly opposite the fire, leaving a respectful distance on each side, within which no illiterate mortal durst presume to sit.

"Mr. Corcoran," said the farmer, presenting Jemmy's ✓ satchel, through which the shapes of the books were quite plain, "*thigin thu shinn ?*" † and as he spoke he looked significantly at its owner.

"Ah !" replied the man of letters, "*thigum, thigum.*" ‡ God be wid the day when I carried the likes of it.

* Considerate. † Do you understand this.
‡ I understand—I understand.

'Tis a badge of polite genius, that no boy need be ashamed of. So my young suckling of litherature, your'e bound for Munster?—for that counthry where the swallows fly in conic sections—where the magpies and the turkeys confab in Latin, and the cows and bullocks will roar you Doric Greek—bo-a-o—clamo. What's your pathronymic?—*quo nomine* gowdes, *Domine doctissime*?"

The lad was silent; but the farmer's wife turned up the whites of her eyes with an expression of wonder and surprise at the erudition of the "masther."

"I persave you are as yet uninitiated into the elementary *principia* of the languages; well—the honour is still before you. What's your name?"

"James M'Evoy, sir."

Just now the farmer's family began to assemble round the spacious hearth; the young lads, whose instruction the worthy teacher claimed as his own peculiar task, came timidly forward, together with two or three pretty bashful girls with sweet flashing eyes, and countenances full of feeling and intelligence. Behind on the settles, half-a-dozen servants of both sexes sat in pairs—each boy placing himself beside his favourite girl. These *appeared* to be as strongly interested in the learned conversation which the master held, as if they were masters and mistresses of Munster Latin and Doric Greek themselves; but an occasional thump cautiously bestowed by no slender female hand upon the sturdy shoulder of her companion, or a dry cough from one of the young men, fabricated to drown the coming blow, gave slight indications that they contrived to have a little amusement among themselves, altogether independent of Mr. Corcoran's erudition.

When the latter came in, Jemmy was taking the tumbler of punch which the farmer's wife had mixed for him; on this he fixed an expressive glance, which instantly reverted to the *vanithee*, and from her to the large bottle which stood in a window to the right of the fire. It is a quick eye, however, that can anticipate Irish hospitality.

ey," said the farmer, ere the wife had time to with the hint conveyed by the black, twinkling the schoolmaster ; why, Alley"—

e, I am," she replied, "an' will have it for you than no time."

Accordingly addressed herself to the bottle, and a few minutes handed a reeking jug of punch to the schoolmaster, or good man.

"Well, Masther, by the hand o' my body, I don't say talk so long as I can get anything to moisten the coarse. Here's your health, Masther," continued the farmer, winking at the rest, "and a speedy run to what you know ! In throth, she's the a good girl—not to mention what she has for her own. I'm a frind to the same family, an' will be in your wheel, Masther, that'll sarve you."

"Mr. Lanigan, very well, sir—very well—you're being quite facetious upon me," said the little schoolmaster, confused ; "but upon my credit and honour, except the amorous inclination in regard to her side," and he looked sheepishly at his wife. "I can't say that the arrows of Cupid have assailed the sentimental side of my heart. It strikes me as it was with Dido—hem—"

Non hæret lateri lethalis arundo,

he says. Yet I can't say, but if a friend were my spokesman for me, and insinuate in my small taste of amorous sentimentality, why—hem ! The company's health ! Lad, James, your health, and success to you, my good friend, hem !"

"It's wishin' him the same !" said the farmer.

"Yes," said the schoolmaster, "you are goin' to ; an' I can say that I have travelled it from London, not to a bad purpose, I hope—hem ! I know, though, there are hard days and nights before we keep a firm heart. If you have money, as 'tis said, you have, don't let a single rap of it into the pocket of the schoolmaster, although the first thing

he'll do will be to bring you home to his own house, an' palaver you night an' day, till he succeeds in persuading you to leave it in his hands for security. You might, if not duly pre-admonished, surrender it to his solicitations, for—

'Nemo mortallum omnibus horis sapit.'

Michael, what case is *mortalium*?" added he, suddenly addressing one of the farmer's sons: "come, now, Michael, where's your brightness? What case is *mortalium*?"

The boy was taken by surprise, and, for a few minutes, could not reply.

"Come man," said the father, "be sharp, spake out bravely, an' don't be afeard; nor don't be in a hurry aither, we'll wait for you."

"Let him alone—let him alone," said Corcoran; "I'll face the same boy agin the county for *cuteness*. If he doesn't expound that, I'll never consthre a line of Latin, or Greek, or Masoretic, while I'm livin'."

His cunning master knew right well that the boy, who was only confused at the suddenness of the question, would feel no difficulty in answering it to his satisfaction. Indeed, it was impossible for him to miss it, as he was then reading the seventh book of Virgil, and the fourth of Homer. It is, however, a trick with such masters to put simple questions of that nature to their pupils, when at the houses of their parents, as knotty and difficult, and when they are answered, to assume an air of astonishment at the profound reach of thought displayed by the pupil.

When Michael recovered himself, he instantly replied, "*Mortalium* is the ginitive case of *nemo*, by '*Nomina Partitiva*.'"

Corcoran laid down the tumbler, which he was in the act of raising to his lips, and looked at the lad with an air of surprise and delight, then at the farmer and his wife alternately, and shook his head with much mystery. "Michael," said he to the lad, "will you go out, and tell us what the night's doin'."

The boy accordingly went out—"Why," said Corcoran, in his absence, "if ever there was a phanix, and that boy will be the bird—an Irish phanix he will be, a

Rara avis in terris, nigroque similissima cygno!

There's no batin' him at anything he undhertakes. Why, there's thim that are makin' good bread by their larnin', that couldn't resolve that; and you all saw how he did it widout the book! Why, if he goes on at this rate, I'm afraid he'll soon be too many for myself—hem!"

"Too many for yourself! Fill the masther's tumbler, Alley. Too many for yourself! No, no! I doubt he'll never see that day, bright as he is, an' cute. That's it—put a hape upon it. Give me your hand, masther. I thank you for your attintion to him, an the boy is a credit to us. Come over, Michael, avourneen. Here, take what's in this tumbler, an' finish it. Be a good boy, an' mind your lessons, an' do everything the masther here—the Lord bless him!—bids you; an' you'll never want a frind, masther, nor a dinner, nor a bed, nor a guinea, while the Lord spares me aither the one or the other."

"I know it, Mr. Lanigan, I know it; and I will make that boy the pride of Ireland, if I'm spared. I'll show him *cramboes* that would puzzle the great Scaliger himself; and many other difficulties I'll let him into, that I have never let out yet, except to Tim Kearney, that bate them all at Thrinity College in Dublin, up last June."

"Arrah, how was that, Masther?"

"Tim, you see, went in to his Entrance Examinayshuns, and one of the Fellows came to examine him, but divil a long it was till Tim sacked him.

"'Go back agin,' says Tim, 'and sind some one that's able to tache me, for you're *not*.'

"So another greater scholar agin came to thry Tim, and *did* thry him, and Tim made a hare of *him*, before all that was in the place—five or six thousand ladies and gintlemen, at laste?

"The great learned Fellows thin began to look odd enough ; so they picked out the best scholar among them but one, and slipped him at Tim : but well becomes Tim, the never a long it was till he had *him*, too, as dunib as a post. The fellow went back—

" 'Gintlemen,' says he to the rest, 'we'll be disgraced all out,' says he, 'for except the Prowost sacks that Munsther spalpeen, he'll bate us all, an' we'll never be able to hould up our heads afther.'

"Accordingly, the Prowost attacks Tim ; and such a meetin' as they had, never was seen in Thrinity College since its establishment. At last when they had been nine hours and a half at it, the Prowost put one word to him that Tim couldn't expound, so he lost it by *one* word only. For the last two hours the Prowost carried an the examinashun in Hebrew, thinking, you see, he *had* Tim there ; but he was mistaken, for Tim answered him in good Munsther Irish, and it so happened that they understood each other, for the two languages are first cousins, or at all evints, close blood relations. Tim was then pronounced to be the best scholar in Ireland except the Prowost ; though among ourselves, they might have thought of the man that *taught* him. That, however, wasnt all. A young lady fell in love wid Tim, and is to make him a present of herself and her great fortune (three estates) the moment he becomes a counsellor ; and in the meantime she allows him thirty pounds a year to bear his expenses, and live like a gentleman.

"Now to return to the youth in the corner : *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*. Jemmy, keep your money, or give it to the priest to keep, and it will be safest ; but by no means let the Hyblean honey of the schoolmaster's blarney deprive you of it, otherwise it will be a *vale, vale, longum vale* between you. *Crede experto !*"

"Mashter," said the farmer, "many a strange accident you met with on yer thravels through Munsther ?"

"No doubt of that, Mr. Lanigan. I and another boy thravelled it in society together. One day we

were walking towards a gentleman's house on the road side, and it happened that we met the owner of it in the vicinity, although we didn't know him to be such."

"*Salvete Domini!*" said he, in good fresh Latin.

"*Tu sis salvus quoque!*" said I to him, for my comrade wasn't cute, an' I was always orathor.

"*Unde venitis?*" said he, comin' over us wid another deep piece of larnin', the construction of which was, 'where do yez come from?'

"I replied, '*Per varios casus et tot discrimina rerum, venimus a Mayo.*'

"Good!" said he, you're bright; follow me.'

"So he brought us over to his own house, and ordered us bread and a posset; for it was Friday, an' we couldn't touch mate. He, in the mane time, sat an' chatted along wid us. The theivin' cook, however, in making the posset, kept the curds to herself, except a slight taste, here and there, that floated on the top; but she was liberal enough of the whey, any how.

"Now I had been well trained to fishing in my more youthful days; and no gorsoon could grope a trout wid me. I accordingly sent the spoon through the pond before me with the skill of a connoisseur; but to no purpose—it came up wid nothin' but the whey.

"So, said I off hand to the gentleman, houlding up the bowl, and looking at it with a disappointed face,

Apparent *rari* nantes in gurgite vasto.

'This,' says I, 'plase your hospitality, may be Pactolus, but the devil a taste o' the proper sand is in the bottom of it.'

"The wit of this, you see, pleased him, and we got an excellent treat in his *studium*, or study; for he was determined to give myself another trial.

"What's the wickedest line in Virgil?" said he.

"Now I had Virgil at my fingers' ends, so I answered him :

'Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.'

" 'Very good,' said he, 'you have the genius, and will come to somethin' yet : now tell me the most moral line in Virgil.'

"I answered :

*'Discere justitiam moniti, et non temnere ditos.'**

" 'Depend upon it,' said he, 'you will be a luminary. The morning-star will be but a farthing candle to you ; and if you take in the learning as you do the cheese, in a short time there won't be a man in Munsther fit to teach you,' and he laughed, for you see he had a tendency to jocosity.

"He did not give me up here, however, being determined to go deeper wid me.

" 'Can you translate a newspaper into Latin prose ?' said he.

"Now the devil a one o' me was just then sure about the prose, so I was goin to' tell him ; but before I had time to speak, he thrust the paper into my hand, and desired me to thranslate half-a-dozen barbarous advertisements.

"The first that met me was about a reward offered for a Newfoundland dog and a terrier, that had been stolen from a fishing-tackle manufacturer, and then came a list of his shabby merchandize, ending with a long-winded encomium upon his gunpowder, shot, and double-barrelled guns. Now, may I be shot wid a blank cartridge, if I ever felt so much at an amplash in my life, and I said so.

" 'Your honour has hooked me wid the fishing-hooks,' said I ; 'but I grant the cheese was good bait, any how.'

* He is evidently drawing the long bow here ; this anecdote has been told before.

"So he laughed heartily and bid me go on.

"Well, I thought the first was difficult ; but the second was Masoretic to it—something about drawbacks, excisemen, and a long custom-house list, that would puzzle Publius Virgilius Maro, if he was set to translate it. However, I went through wid it as well as I could ; where I couldn't find Latin, I laid in the Greek, and where the Greek failed me, I gave the Irish, which, to tell the truth, in consequence of its vernacularity, I found to be the most convanient. Och, och, many a larned scrimmage I have signalized myself in, during my time. Sure my name's as common as a mail coach in Thrinity College ; and 'tis well known there isn't a Fellow in it but I could sack, except, may be, the Prowost. That's their own opinion. 'Corcoran,' says the Prowost, 'is the most larned man in Ireland ; an' I'm not ashamed,' says he, 'to acknowledge that I 'd rather decline meeting him upon deep points.' Ginteels, all your healths—hem ! But among ourselves I could bog him in a very short time ; though I 'd scorn to deprive the gentleman of his reputation or his place, even if he sent me a challenge of larnin' to-morrow, although he's too cute to venture on doing *that*—hem, hem !"

To hear an obscure creature, whose name was but faintly known in the remote parts even of the parish in which he lived, draw the long-bow at such a rate, was highly amusing. The credulous character of his auditory, however, was no slight temptation to him ; and he was determined that it should not be his fault if their opinion of his learning and talents were not raised to the highest point.

The feeling experienced by the poor scholar, when he awoke the next morning, was one both of satisfaction and sorrow. He thought once more of his home and kindred, and reflected that it might be possible he had seen the last of his beloved relations. His grief, however, was checked when he remembered the warm and paternal affection with which he was received on the preceding night by his hospitable

countryman. He offered up his prayers to God; humbly besought his grace and protection; nor did he forget to implore a blessing upon those who had thus soothed his early sorrows, and afforded him, though a stranger and friendless, shelter, comfort, and sympathy.

"I hope," thought he, "that I will meet many such, till I overcome my difficulties, an' find myself able to assist my poor father an' mother!"

And he did meet many such among the humble and despised, and neglected of his countrymen; for—and we say it with pride—the character of this excellent farmer is thoroughly that of our peasantry within the range of domestic life.

When he had eaten a comfortable breakfast, and seen his satchel stuffed with provisions for his journey, the farmer brought him up into his own room, in which were also his wife and children.

"God," said he, "has been good to me; blessed be his holy name!—betthur it appears, in one since, than he has been to you, dear, though maybe I don't deserve it as well. But no matthur, acushla; *I* have it, an' *you* want it; so here's a thrifle to help you forrid in your larnin'; an' all I ax from you is to offer up a bit of a prayer for me, of an odd time, an' if ever you live to be a priest, to say, if it wouldn't be troublesome, one Mass for me an' those that you see about me. It's not much, James agra—only two guineas. They may stand your friend, whin friends will be scarce wid you; though I hope, that won't be the case aither."

The tears were already streaming down Jemmy's cheeks. "Oh," said the artless boy, "God for ever reward you! but sure I have a great dale of money in the—in the—cuff o' my coat! Indeed, I have, an' I won't want it!"

The farmer, affected by the utter simplicity of the lad, looked at his wife and smiled, although a tear stood in his eye at the time. She wiped her eyes with her apron and backed the kind offer of her husband.

"Take it, asthore," she added, "in your cuff! Musha, God help you! sure it's not much you or the likes of you can have in your cuff, avourneen! Don't be ashamed, but take it: we can well afford it, glory be to God for it! It's not, agra, bekase you're goin' the way you are—though that same's an honour to you—but bekase our hearts warmed to you, that we offered it, an' bekase we would wish you to be thinkin' of us now and thin, when you're in a strange part of the country. Let me open your pocket an' put them into it. That's a good boy, thank you, an' God bless an' prosper you! I'm sure you wor always biddable."

"Now, childher," said the farmer, addressing his sons and daughters, "never see the sthranger widout a frind, nor wantin' a bed or a dinner, when you grow up to be men an' women. There's many a turn in this world; we may be strangers ourselves; an' think of what I would feel if any of you was far from me, widout money or friends, when I'd hear that you met a father in a strange counthry that lightened your hearts by his kindness. Now, dear, the carts' ll be ready in no time—eh? Why, there they are at the gate waitin' for you. Get into one of them, an' they'll lave you in the next town. Come, man, bud-an' age, be stout-hearted, an' don't cry; sure we did nothin' for you to spake of."

He shook the poor scholar by the hand, and drawing his hat over his eyes, passed hurriedly out of the room. Alley stooped down, kissed his lips, and wept; and the children each embraced him with that mingled feeling of compassion and respect which is uniformly entertained for the poor scholar in Ireland.

The boy felt as if he had been again separated from his parents; with a sobbing bosom and wet cheeks he bid them farewell, and mounting one of the carts was soon beyond sight and hearing of the kind-hearted farmer and his family.

When the cart had proceeded about a mile it.

stopped, and one of the men who accompanied it addressing a boy who passed with two sods of turf under his arm, desired him to hurry on and inform his master that they waited for him.

"Tell Misther Corcoran to come into coort," said the man, laughing, "my Lordship's waitin' to hear his defince for intindin' *not* to run away wid Miss Judy Malowny. Tell him Lord *Carty's* ready to pass sintince on him for not stalin' the heart of her wid his Rule o' Three. Ah! by the holy farmer, you'll get it for stayin' from school to this hour. Be quick, abouchal!"

In a few minutes the trembling urchin, glad of any message that might serve to divert the dreaded birch from himself, entered the uprorious "Siminary," caught his forelock, bobbed down his head to the master, and pitched his "two sods" into a little heap of turf which lay in the corner of the school.

"Arrah, Pat Roach, is this an hour to inter into my establishment wid impunity? Eh, you Rosicrusian."

"Masther, sir," replied the adroit monkey, "I've a message for you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' what might the message be, Masther Pat Roach? To dine to-day wid your worthy father, abouchal?"

"No, sir; it's from one o' Mr. Lanigan's boys—him that belongs to the carts, sir; he wants to spake to you, sir, i' you plase."

"An' do you give that by way of an apologetical oration for your absence from the advantages of my tuition until this hour? However, *non constat, Patrici*; I'll pluck the crow wid you on my return. If you don't find yourself a well-flogged youth for your 'mitchin,' never say that this right hand can administer condign punishment to that part of your physical theory which constitutes the antithesis to your *vacuum caput*. *En et ecce*, you villain," he added, pointing to the birch, "it's newly cut and trimmed, and regnant wid alacrity for the operation.

I correct, Patricius, on fundamental principles, which you'll soon *feel* to your cost."

"Masther, sir," replied the lad, in a friendly, conciliating tone, "my fadher 'ud be oblaged to you, if you'd take share of a fat goose wid him to-morrow."

"Go to your sate, Paddy, avourneen ; devil a dacent boy in the siminary I joke so much wid, as I do wid yourself ; an' all out of respect for your worthy parents. Faith, I've a great regard for them, all out, an' tell them so."

He then proceeded to the carts, and approaching Jemmy, gave him such advice touching his conduct in Munster, as he considered to be most serviceable to an inexperienced lad of his years.

"Here," said the kind-hearted soul—"here, James, is my mite ; it's but bare ten shillings ; but if I could make it a pound for you, it would give me a degree of delectability which I have not enjoyed for a long time. The truth is, there's something like the *nodus matrimonii*, or what they facetiously term the priests' gallows, dangling over my head, so that any little thrifle I may get must be bept together for that crisis, James, abouchal ; so that must be my apology for not giving you more, joined to the naked fact, that I never was remarkable for a superfluity of cash under any circumstances. Remember what I told you last night. Don't let a shilling of your money into the hands of the masther you settle wid. Give it to the parish priest, and dhraw it from him when you want it. Don't join the parties or the factions of the school. Above all, spake ill of nobody ; and if the masther is harsh upon you, either bear it patiently, or mintion it to the priest, or to some other person of respectability in the parish, and you'll be protected. You'll be apt to meet cruelty enough, my good boy ; for there are larned Neros in Munster, who'd flog if the province was in flames.

"Now, James, I'll tell you what you'll do, when you reach the larned south. Plant yourself on the highest hill in the neighbourhood wherein the academician

with whom you intend to stop, lives. Let the hour of reconnoitring be that in which dinner is preparing. When seated there, James, take a survey of the smoke that ascends from the chimnies of the farmers' houses, and be sure to direct your steps to that from which the highest and merriest column issues. This is the old plan, and it is a sure one. The highest smoke rises from the largest fire, the largest fire boils the biggest pot, the biggest pot generally holds the fattest bacon, and the fattest bacon is kept by the richest farmer. It's a wholesome and comfortable *climax*, my boy, and one by which I myself was enabled to keep a dacent portion of educated flesh between the master's birch and my ribs. The science itself is called Gastric Geography, and is peculiar only to itinerant young gentlemen who seek for knowledge in the classical province of Munster.

"Here's a book that thravelled along wid myself through all my peregrinations—Creech's Translation of Horace. Keep it for my sake; and when you accomplish your education, if you return home this way, I'd thank you to give me a call. Farewell! God bless you and prosper you as I wish, and as I am sure you deserve."

He shook the lad by the hand; and as it was probable that his own former struggles with poverty, when in the pursuit of education, came with all the power of awakened recollection to his mind, he hastily drew his hand across his eyes, and returned to resume the brief but harmless authority of the ferula.

After arriving at the next town, Jemmy found himself once more prosecuting his journey alone. In proportion as he advanced into a strange land, his spirits became depressed, and his heart cleaved more and more to those whom he had left behind him. There is, however, an enthusiasm in the visions of youth, in the speculation of a young heart, which frequently overcomes difficulties that a mind taught by the experience of life would often shrink from encountering. We may all remember the utter reck-

ness of danger with which, in our youthful days, crossed floods, or stood upon the brow of yawning precipices—feats which, in after years, the wealth of gold could not induce us to perform. Experience, well as conscience, makes cowards of us all.

The poor scholar in the course of his journey had satisfaction of finding himself an object of kind and hospitable attention to his countrymen. His satchel of books was literally a passport to their hearts. For instance, as he wended his solitary way, pressed and travel-worn, he was frequently accosted by labourers from behind a ditch on the road-side, and receiving a brief history of the object he had in view, brought, if it was dinner-hour, to some farmhouse or cabin, where he was made to partake of their food. Even those poor creatures who gain a scanty subsistence by keeping what are called “dhray lodgings,” *lucus a non lucendo*, because they never keep out rain, and have mostly a bottle of whisky for those who know *how* to call for it,—even they, in most instances, not only refused to charge the poor scholar with his bed, but declined receiving any remuneration for his subsistence.

Och, och, no, you poor young crathur, not from

No, no ; if we wouldn't help the likes o' you, ought we to help ? No dear ; but instead o' the *ghad*,* jist lave us your blessin', an' maybe we'll be as well wid that, as we would wid your little money, that you'll be wantin' for yourself, when your friends won't be near to help you."

any, in fact, were the little marks of kindness and attention which the poor lad received on his way. Sometimes a ragged peasant, if he happened to be his fellow-traveller, would carry his satchel so long as they walked together, or a carman would give him a lift in his empty car ; or some humorous postillion, or a "shay-boy," with a comical leer in his eye, would shove him into his vehicle, remarking—

Bedad, let nobody say your'e a poor scholar now,

* Money.

an' you goin' to school in a coach ! Be the piper that played afore Moses, if ever any rascal upbraids you wid it, tell him, says you—'You damned rap,' says you. 'I wint to school in a coach ! an' that,' says you, 'was what none o' yer beggarly gineration was ever able to do,' says you ; 'an' moreover, be the same token,' says you, 'be the holy farmer, if you bring it up to me, I'll make a third eye in your forehead wid the butt o' this whip,' says you. Whish ! darlins ! That's the go ! There's drivin', Barny ! Eh ?"

At length, after much toil and travel, he reached the South, having experienced as he proceeded a series of affectionate attentions, which had, at least, the effect of reconciling him to the measure he had taken, and impressing upon his heart, a deeper confidence in the kindness and hospitality of his countrymen.

Upon the evening of the day on which he terminated his journey, twilight was nearly falling ; the town in which he intended to stop for the night was not a quarter of a mile before him, yet he was scarcely able to reach it ; his short, yielding steps were evidently those of a young and fatigued traveller : his brow was moist with perspiration ; he had just begun, too, to consider in what manner he should introduce himself to the master who taught the school at which he had been advised to stop, when he heard a step behind him, and on looking back he discovered a tall, well-made, ruddy-faced young man, dressed in black, with a book in his hand, walking after him.

"*Unde et quo viator ?*" said the stranger on coming up with him.

"Oh, Sir," replied Jemmy, "I have not Latin yet."

"You are on your way to seek it, however," replied the other. "Have you travelled far ?"

"A long way, indeed, Sir ; I came from the County —, Sir,—the upper part of it."

"Have you letters from your parish priest ?"

"I have, Sir, and one from my father's landlord, Square Benson, if you ever heard of him."

11 "What's your object in learning Latin ?"

"To be a priest, Sir, with the help o' God ; an' to rise my poor father an' mother out of their poverty."

His companion, after hearing this reply, bent a glance upon him, that indicated the awakening of an interest in the lad much greater than he probably otherwise would have felt.

"It's only of late," continued the boy, "that my father an' mother got poor ; they were once very well to do in the world. But they were put out o' their farm in ordher that the agint might put a man that had married a *get** of his own into it. My father intended to lay his case before Colonel B——, the landlord ; but he couldn't see him at all, bekase he never comes near the estate. The agint's called Yallow Sam, Sir ! he's rich through cheatrey an' dishonesty ; puts money out at intherest, then goes to law, an' brakes the people entirely ; for, somehow, he never was known to lose a law-suit at all, Sir. They say it's the divil, Sir, that keeps the lawyers on his side ; an' that when he an' the lawyers do be dhrawin' up their writins, the devil—God betune me an' harm !—does be helpin' them !"

"And is Colonel B—— actually—or, rather, was he your father's landlord ?"

"He was, indeed, Sir ; it's truth I'm tellin' you."

"Singular enough ! Stand beside me here—do you see that large house to the right among the trees ?"

"I do, Sir ; a great big house, entirely—like a castle, Sir."

"The same. Well, that house belongs to Colonel B——, and I am very intimate with him. I am Catholic curate of this parish ; and I was, before my ordination, private tutor in his family for four years."

"Maybe, Sir, you might have intherest to get my father back into his farm ?"

"I do not know that, my good lad, for I am told Colonel B—— is rather embarrassed, and, if I mistake not, in the power of the man you call Yallow Sam, who has, I believe, heavy mortgages upon his property."

* A term implying illegitimacy.

But no matter ; if I cannot help your father, I shall be able to serve yourself. Where do you intend to stop for the night ?”

“In dhry lodgin’, Sir, that’s where my father an’ mother bid me stop always. They war very kind to me, Sir, in the dhry lodgins.”

“Who is there in Ireland who would not be kind to *you*, my good boy ? I trust you do not neglect your religious duties ?”

“Wid the help o’ God, Sir, I strive to attind to them as well as I can ; particularly since I left my father and mother. Every night an’ mornin’ Sir, I say five Pathers, five Aves, an’ a Creed ; an’ sometimes when I’m walkin’ the road, I slip up an odd Pather, Sir, an’ Ave, that God may grant me good luck.”

The priest smiled at his candour and artlessness, and could not help feeling the interest which the boy had already excited in him increase.

“You do right,” said he, “and take care that you neglect not the worship of God. Avoid bad company : be not quarrelsome at school ; study to improve yourself diligently ; attend mass regularly ; and be punctual in going to confession.”

After some further conversation the priest and he entered the town together.

“This is my house,” said the former ; “or if not altogether mine—at least, that in which I lodge ; let me see you here at two o’clock to-morrow. In the meantime, follow me, and I shall place you with a family where you will experience every kindness and attention that can make you comfortable.”

He then led him a few doors up the street, till he stopped at a decent looking “House of Entertainment,” to the proprietors of which he introduced him.

“Be kind to this strange boy,” said the worthy clergyman, “and whatever the charges of his board and lodging may be until we get him settled, I shall be accountable for them.”

“God forbid, your Reverence, that ever a penny *belongin’ to a poor boy* lookin’ for his larnin’ should

go into our pockets, if he was wid us for twelve months in the year. No—no ! He can stay with the bouchalleens ;* let them be thryin' one another in their books. If he is fardher on in the Latin than Andy, he can help Andy ; an' if Andy has the foreway of him, why Andy can help him. Come here, boys, all of yez. Here's a comrade for yez—a dacent boy that's lookin' for his larnin', the Lord enable him ! Now be kind to him, an' whisper," he added, in an under tone, "don't be bringin' a blush to the gorsoon's face. Do ye hear ? Ma chorp ! if ye do !—Now mind it. Ye know what I can do whin I'm well vexed ! Go, now, an' get him somethin' to ate an' dhrink, an' let him sleep wid Barney in the feather bed."

During the course of the next day, the benevolent curate introduced him to the parish priest, who, from the frequent claims urged by poor scholars upon his patronage, felt no particular interest in his case. He wrote a short letter, however, to the master with whom Jemmy intended to become a pupil, stating that "he was an honest boy, the son of *legitimate* parents, and worthy of consideration."

The curate, who saw further into the boy's character than the parish priest, accompanied him on the following day to the school ; introduced him to the master in the most favourable manner, and recommended him in general to the hospitable care of all the pupils. This introduction did not serve the boy so much as might have been expected ; there was nothing particular in the letter of the *parish* priest, and the curate was *but* a curate—no formidable personage in *any* church, where the goodwill of the rector has not been already secured.

Jemmy returned that day to his lodgings, and the next morning, with his Latin Grammar under his arm, he went to the school to taste the first bitter—fruits of the tree of knowledge.

On entering it, which he did with a beating heart,

* Little boys.

he found the despot of a hundred subjects sitting behind a desk, with his hat on, a brow superciliously severe, and his nose crimped into a most cutting and vinegar curl. The truth was, the master knew the character of the curate, and felt that because he had taken Jemmy under his protection, no opportunity remained for him of fleecing the boy, under the pretence of securing his money, and that consequently the arrival of the poor scholar would be no windfall, as he had expected.

When Jemmy entered, he looked first at the master for his welcome ; but the master, who verified the proverb, that there are none so blind as those who will not see, took no notice whatsoever of him. The boy then looked timidly about the school in quest of a friendly face, and, indeed, few faces except friendly ones were turned upon him.

Several of the scholars rose up simultaneously to speak to him ; but the pedagogue angrily inquired why they had left their seats and their business.

"Why, Sir," said a young Munsterman, with a fine Milesian face—"be Gorra, Sir, I believe if *we* don't welcome the poor scholar, I think *you* won't. This is the boy, Sir, that Mr. O'Brien came along wid yistherday, an' spoke so well of."

"I know that, Thady ; and Misther O'Brien thinks, because he himself first passed through that overgrown hedge-school wid slates upon the roof of it, called Thrinity College, and matriculated in Maynooth afther, that he has legal authority to recommend every young vagrant to the gratuitous benefits of legitimate classicality. An', I suppose, that you are acting the Pathrun, too, Thady, and intend to take this young wild-goose under your protection?"

"Why, Sir, isn't he a poor scholar? Sure he mustn't want his bit an' sup, nor his night's lodgin', anyhow. You're to give him his larnin' only, Sir."

"I suppose so, Mr. Thaddeus ; but this is the penalty of celebrity. If I weren't so celebrated a man for classics as I am, I would have none of this work.

I you, Thady, if I had fifty sons I wouldn't make o' them *celebrated*."

Wait till you have one first, Sir, and you may e him as great a numskull as you plase, Masther."

But in the meantime, Thady, I'll have no dicta- from you, as to whether I'll have one or fifty ; or

whether he'll be an ass or a Newton. I say that arth of larnin' is like a year of famine in Ireland.

On the people are hard pushed, they bleed the ast bullocks, an' live on their blood ; an' so it is

us Academicians. It's always he that has the t larned blood in his veins, and the greatest

itity of it, that such hungry leeches fasten on."

Thru for you, Sir," said the youth, with a smile ; t they say the bullocks always fatten the betther t. I hope you'll bleed well now, Sir."

Thady, I don't like the curl of your nose ; an', sover, I have always found you prone to sedition.

remember your conduct at the 'Barring out.' l you it's well that your worthy father is a dacent

lthy man, or I'd be apt to give you a *memoria rica* on the *subtratum*, Thady."

God be praised for my father's wealth, Sir ! But never wish to have a good memory in the way you tion."

Faith, an' I'll be apt to add that to your other ities, if you don't take care of yourself."

I want no such addition, Masther ; if you do, ll be apt to substract yourself from this neigh-

hood, an' maybe, there won't be more than a er gone out of it, afther all."

Thady, you're a wag," exclaimed the crest-fallen ogue ; "take the lad to your own sate, and show

his task. How is your sister's sore throat, dy ?"

Why, Sir," replied the benevolent young wit, "she's her than I am. She can *swallow* more, Sir."

Not of larnin', Thady ; there you've the widest et in the parish."

My father's the richest man in it, Masther, re-

plied Thady. "I think, Sir, my gullet and his purse are much about the same size—wid you."

"Thady, you're first-rate at a reply; but exceedingly deficient in the retort courteous. Take the lad to your sate, I say, and see how far he is advanced, and what he is fit for. I suppose, as you are so ginerous, you will volunteer to tache him yourself."

"I'll do that wid pleasure, Sir; but I'd like to know whether *you* intind to tache him or not."

"An' I'd like to know, Thady, who's to pay me for it, if I do. A purty return Michael Rooney made me for making him such a linguist as he is. 'You're a tyrant,' said he, when he grew up, 'and instead of expecting me to thank you for your instructions, you ought to thank me for not preparing you for the county hospital, as a memento of the cruelty and brutality you made me feel, when I had the misfortune to be a poor scholar under you.' And so, because he became curate of the parish, he showed me the outside of it."

"But will you tache this poor young boy, Sir?"

"Let me know who's to guarantee his payments."

"I have money myself, Sir, to pay you for two years," replied Jemmy. "They told me, Sir, that you were a great scholar, an' I refused to stop in other schools by rason of the name you have for Latin and Greek."

"*Verbum Sat.*," exclaimed the barefaced knave. "Come here. Now, you see, I persave you have dacency. Here is your task; get that half page by heart. You have a cute look, an' I've no doubt but the stuff's in you. Come to me afther dismiss, 'till we have a little talk together."

He accordingly pointed out the task, after which he placed him at his side, lest the inexperienced boy might be put on his guard by any of the scholars. In this intention, however, he was frustrated by Thady, who, as he thoroughly detested the knavish tyrant, resolved to caution the poor scholar against his dishonesty. Thady, indeed, most heartily despised the

mercenary pedagogue, not only for his obsequiousness to the rich, but on account of his severity to the children of the poor. About two o'clock the young wag went out for a few minutes, and immediately returned in great haste to inform the master, that Mr. Delany, the parish priest, and two other gentlemen, wished to see him over at the Cross-Keys, an inn which was kept at a place called the Nine Mile House, within a few perches of the school. The parish priest was the master's patron, and his slightest wish a divine law to him. The little despot, forgetting his prey, instantly repaired to the Cross-Keys, and in his absence, Thady, together with the larger boys of the school, made M'Evoy acquainted with the fraud about to be practiced on him.

"His intintion," said they, "is to keep you at home to-night, in ordher to get whatever money you have into his own hands, that he may keep it safe for you ; but if you give him a penny, you may bid farewell to it. Put it in the curate's hands," added Thady, "or in my father's, an' thin it'll be safe. At all evints, don't stay wid him this night. He'll take your money and then turn you off in three or four weeks."

"I didn't intind to give him my money," replied Jemmy ; "a schoolmaster I met on my way here, bid me not to do it. I'll give it to the priest."

"Give it to the curate," said Thady,— "wid him it'll be safe ; for the parish priest doesn't like to trouble himself wid anything of the kind."

This was agreed upon ; the boy was prepared against the designs of the master, and a plan laid down for his future conduct. In the mean time, the latter re-entered the school in a glow of indignation and disappointment.

Thady, however, disregarded him ; and as the master knew that the influence of the boy's father could at any time remove him from the parish, his anger subsided without any very violent consequences. *The parish priest was his avowed patron*

it is true ; but if the parish priest knew that Mr. O'Rorke was dissatisfied with him, that moment he would join Mr. O'Rorke in expelling him from the neighbourhood. Mr. O'Rorke was a wealthy and a hospitable man, but the schoolmaster was neither the one nor the other.

During school-hours that day, many a warm-hearted urchin entered into conversation with the poor scholar ; some moved by curiosity to hear his brief and simple history ; others anxious to offer him a temporary asylum in their fathers' houses ; and several to know if he had the requisite books, assuring him that if he had not, they would lend them to him. These proofs of artless generosity touched the homeless youth's heart the more acutely, inasmuch as he could perceive but too clearly that the eye of the master rested upon him, from time to time, with no auspicious glance.

When the scholars were dismissed, a scene occurred which was calculated to produce a smile, although it certainly placed the poor scholar in a predicament by no means agreeable. It resulted from a contest among the boys as to who should first bring him home. The master who, by that cunning for which the knavish are remarkable, had discovered in the course of the day that his design upon the boy's money was understood, did not ask him to his house. The contest was, therefore, among the scholars ; who when the master had disappeared from the school-room, formed themselves into a circle, of which Jemmy was the centre, each pressing his claim to secure him.

"The right's wid me," exclaimed Thady ; "I stood to him all day, an' I say I'll have him for this night. Come wid me, Jimmy. Didn't I do most for you to-day ?"

"I'll never forget your kindness," replied poor Jemmy, quite alarmed at the boisterous symptoms of pugilism which already began to appear. In fact, many a tiny fist was shut, as a suitable accompani-

to the arguments with which they enforced assumed rights.

ere, now," continued Thady, "that puts an it; he says he'll never forget my kindness. enough; come wid me, Jimmy."

is enough," said a lad, who, if his father was less y than Thady's, was resolved to put strength against strength of purse. "Maybe it isn't ! I say I bar it, if your fadher was fifty s rich!—Rich! Arrah, don't be comin' over egard of your riches, man alive! I'll bring the ge boy home this very night, an' it isn't your s dirty money that'll prevint me."

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you say a word, I'll half-sole your eye. Let him ether he's able to fight me like a man or not. the chat."

lf-sole my eye! Thin here I am, an' why don't it. You're crowin' over a boy that you're than. I'll fight you for Thady. Now half-sole if you dar! Eh? Here's my eye, now! Arrah, holy man, I'd—Don't we know the white t you. Didn't Barney Murtagh cow you at the ool, on Thursday last, whin we wor bathin'?" me, Ratigan," said Thady, "peel, an' turn out

* Outwit.

I say, I ~~am~~ able to fight you ; an' I'll make you your words against my father, by way of givin' you dinner. An' I'll make the dacent strange boy home wid me over your body—that is, if he'd not afraid to dirty his feet."

Ratigan and Thady immediately set to, and in a few minutes there were scarcely a little pair of fists present that were not at work, either on behalf of the two combatants, or with a view to determine their private rights in being the first to exercise hospitality towards the amazed poor scholar. The fact was that the two largest boys were arguing the point about thirty or forty minor disputes all ran parallel to theirs, and their mode of decision was immediately adopted by the pugnacious urchins of the school. In this manner they were engaged, poor Jemmy attempting to tranquillise and separate them, when the master, armed in all his terrors, presented himself.

With the tact of a sly old disciplinarian, he secured the door, and instantly commenced the formidable task of promiscuous castigation. Heavy vindictive did his arm descend upon those who suspected to have cautioned the boy against his city ; nor amongst the warm-hearted lads, who had thrashed so cunningly, was Thady passed over with a tender hand. Springs, bouncings, doublings, lashing of fingers, scratching of heads, and rubbing of elbows—shouts of pain, and doleful exclamations accompanied by action that displayed surpassing agility—marked the effect with which he wielded his instrument of punishment. In the meantime, in a spirit of reaction, to use a modern phrase, began the master. The master, while thus engaged in dispensing justice, first received a rather vigorous thwack on the ear from behind, by an anonymous contributor, who gifted him with what is called a musical ear, and sang during five minutes afterwards. The master, when turning round to ascertain the traitor, received another insult on the most indefensible side, and with a cordiality of manner, that induced him to

the arguments with which they enforced assumed rights.

"Now," continued Thady, "that puts an end to it; he says he'll never forget my kindness. Enough; come wid me, Jimmy."

"Enough," said a lad, who, if his father was less than Thady's, was resolved to put strength against strength of purse. "Maybe it isn't

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"Double ditch about my nose?"

"I!"

"You able to fight me?"

"Able to thry it, and how, an' willin' too."

"You say you're able to fight me?"

"Bring the boy home whether or not."

"It's not your match, Jack Ratigan," said angrily. "Why don't you challenge your match?"

"I say a word, I'll half-sole your eye. Let him thry he's able to fight me like a man or not. I'll chat."

"I'll half-sole my eye! Thin here I am, an' why don't it. You're crowin' over a boy that you're man. I'll fight you for Thady. Now half-sole if you dar! Eh? Here's my eye, now! Arrah, holy man, I'd—Don't we know the white you. Didn't Barny Murtagh cow you at the col, on Thursday last, whin we wor bathin'?"

"Now, Ratigan," said Thady, "peel, an' turn out

signal for him to leave the parish, felt rather more of the penitent the next morning than did any of his pupils. He was by no means displeased, therefore, to see them drop in about the usual hour. They came, however, not one by one, but in compact groups, each officered by two or three of the larger boys; for they feared that, had they entered singly, he might have punished them singly, until his vengeance should be satisfied. It was by bitter and obstinate struggles that they succeeded in repressing their mirth, when he appeared at his desk with one of his eyes literally closed, and his nose considerably improved in size and richness of colour. When they were all assembled, he hemmed several times, and, in a woe-begone tone of voice, split—by a feeble attempt at maintaining authority, and suppressing his terrors—into two parts, that jarred most ludicrously, he briefly addressed them as follows :—

“Gintlemen classics, I have been now twenty-six years engaged in the propagation of Latin and Greek litherature, in conjunction wid mathematics, but never, until yesterday, has my influence been spurned; never, until yesterday, have sacrilegious hands been laid upon my person; never, have I been kicked—in-sidiously, ungallantly, and treacherously kicked—by my own subjects. No, gintlemen,—and whether I ought to bestow that respectable epithet upon you after yesterday’s proceedings is a matter which admits of dispute,—never before has the lid of my eye been laid drooping, and that in such a manner that I must be blind to the conduct of half my pupils, whether I will or not. You have complained, it appears, of my want of impartiality; but, God knows, you have compelled me to be partial for a week to come. Neither blame me if I may appear to look upon you in scorn for the next fortnight; for I am compelled to turn up my nose at you much against my own inclination. You need never want an illustration of the *naso adunco* of Horace again; I’m a living example of it. That, and the doctrine of projectile

forces, have been exemplified in a manner that will prevent me from ever relishing these subjects in future. No king can consider himself properly such, until after he has received the oil of consecration ; but you, it appears, think differently. You have unkinged me first, and anointed me afterwards ; but I say, no potentate would relish such unction. It smells confoundedly of republicanism. Maybe this is what *you* understand by the Republic of Letters ; but, if it be, I would advise you to change your principles. You treated my ribs as if they were the ribs of a common man ; my shins you took liberties with even to ex-cori-ation ; my head you made a target of, for your hardest turf ; and my nose you dishonoured to my face. Was this gin-erous ? was it discreet ? was it subordinate ? and, above all, was it *classical* ? However, I will show you what greatness of mind is. I will convince you that it is more noble and god-like to forgive an injury, or rather five dozen injuries, than to avenge one : when—hem—yes, I say, when I—I *might* so easily avenge it. I now present you wid an amnesty : return to your allegiance ; but never, while in this seminary, under my tuition, attmpt to take the execution of the laws into your own hands. Homerians, come up !”

This address, in which he purposely threw a dash of banter and mock gravity, delivered with the accompaniments of his swelled nose and drooping eye, pacified his audience more readily than a serious one would have done. It was received without any reply or symptom of disrespect, unless the occasional squeak of a suppressed laugh, or the visible shaking of many sides with inward convulsions, might be termed such.

In the course of the day, it is true, their powers of maintaining gravity were put to a severe test, particularly when, while hearing a class, he began to adjust his drooping eye-lid, or coax back his nose into its natural position. On these occasions a sudden pause might be noticed in the business of the class ; the boy's voice, who happened to read at the time,

would fail him ; and, on resuming his sentence by command of the master, its tone was tremulous, and scarcely adequate to the task of repeating the words without his bursting into laughter. The master observed all this clearly enough, but his mind was already made up to take no further notice of what had happened.

All this, however, conduced to render the situation of the poor scholar much more easy, or rather less penal, than it would otherwise have been. Still the innocent lad was on all possible occasions a butt for this miscreant. To miss a word was a pretext for giving him a cruel blow. To arrive two or three minutes later than the appointed hour was certain on his part to be attended with immediate punishment. Jemmy bore it all with silent heroism. He shed no tear—he uttered no remonstrance ; but, under the anguish of pain so barbarously inflicted, he occasionally looked round upon his schoolfellows with an expression of silent entreaty that was seldom lost upon them. Cruel to him the master often was ; but to inhuman barbarity the large scholars never permitted him to descend. Whenever any of the wealthier farmers' sons had neglected their lessons, or deserved chastisement, the mercenary creature substituted a joke for the birch ; but as soon as the son of a poor man, or, which was better still, the poor scholar came before him, he transferred that punishment which the wickedness or idleness of respectable boys deserved, to his or their shoulders. For this outrageous injustice the hard-hearted old villain had some plausible excuse ready, so that it was in many cases difficult for Jemmy's generous companions to interfere in his behalf, or parry the sophistry of such a petty tyrant.

In this miserable way did he pass over the tedious period of a year, going about every night in rotation with the scholars, and severely beaten on all possible occasions by the master. His conduct and manners won him the love and esteem of all except his tyrant instructor. His assiduity was remarkable, and his

progress in the elements of English and classical literature surprisingly rapid. This added considerably to his character, and procured him additional respect. It was not long before he made himself useful and obliging to all the boys beneath his standing in the school. These services he rendered with an air of such kindness, and a grace so naturally winning, that the attachment of his schoolfellows increased towards him from day to day. Thady was his patron on all occasions ; neither did the Curate neglect him. The latter was his banker, for the boy had very properly committed his purse to his keeping. At the expiration of every quarter the schoolmaster received the amount of his bill, which he never failed to send in, when due.

Jemmy had not, during his first year's residence in the south, forgotten to request the kind Curate's interference with the landlord, on behalf of his father. To be the instrument of restoring his family to their former comfortable holding under Colonel B——, would have afforded him, without excepting the certainty of his own eventual success, the highest gratification. Of this, however, there was no hope, and nothing remained for him but assiduity in his studies, and patience under the merciless scourge of his teacher. In addition to an engaging person and agreeable manners, nature had gifted him with a high order of intellect, and great powers of acquiring knowledge. The latter he applied to the business before him with indefatigable industry. The school at which he settled was considered the first in Munster ; and the master, notwithstanding his known severity, stood high, and justly so, in the opinion of the people, as an excellent classical and mathematical scholar. Jemmy applied himself to the study of both, and at the expiration of his second year had made such progress, that he stood without a rival in the school.

It is usual, as we have said, for the poor scholar to go night after night, in rotation, with his schoolfellows ; he is particularly welcome in the houses of those

farmers whose children are not so far a himself. It is expected that he should ins in the evenings, and enable them to pre lessons for the following day, a task which performs with pleasure, because in teachi is confirming his own mind in the knowl he has previously acquired. Towards the second year, however, he ceased to circula manner. Two or three of the most in parishioners, whose sons were only comme studies, agreed to keep him week about ; ment highly convenient to him, as by tha was not so frequently dragged, as he had b remotest parts of the parish. Being an man, he acted also as secretary of grievan poor, who frequently employed him to dra tions to obdurate landlords, or to their mo agents, and letters to soldiers in all parts of from their anxious and affectionate rela these little services he performed kindly and many a blessing was fervently invoked upo the "good word" and "the prayer" we could afford, as they said, "to the *boucha* that tuck the world an him for sake o' the that hasn't the kindliness o' the mother's the mother's hand near him, the crathur."

About the middle of the third year he more thrown upon the general hospita people. The three farmers with whom he for the preceding six months, emigrated to as did many others of that class which, in try, most nearly approximates to the yeomanry of England. The little purse, he had placed in the hands of the kind exhausted ; a season of famine, sickness, & distress had set in ; and the master, on unc that he was without money, became c savage. In short, the boy's difficulties inc

- - - pretty young boy. Boy in Ireland does not alway

king degree. Even Thady and his grown com-
s, who usually interposed in his behalf when
ster became excessive in correcting him, had
e school, and now the prospect before him was
nd cheerless indeed. For a few months longer,
er, he struggled on, meeting every difficulty
neek endurance. From his very boyhood he
verenced the sanctity of religion, and was
ed by a strong devotional spirit. He trusted in
nd worshipped him night and morning with a
heart.

his crisis he was certainly an object of pity ;
thes, which for some time before had been re-
to tatters, he had replaced by a cast-off coat and
clothes, a present from his friend the Curate,
never abandoned him. This worthy young
uld not afford him money, for as he had but
ounds a-year, with which to clothe, subsist him-
ep a horse, and pay rent, it was hardly to be
ed that his benevolence could be extensive. In
n to this, famine and contagious disease raged
ormidable violence in the parish ; so that the
upon his bounty of hundreds who lay huddled
r in cold cabins, in out-houses, and even behind
, were incessant as well as heart-rending. The
r of interments that took place daily in the
was awful ; nothing could be seen but funerals
ed by groups of ragged and emaciated creatures,
whose hollow eyes gleamed forth the wolfish
famine. The wretched mendicants were count-
d the number of coffins that lay on the public
-where, attended by the nearest relatives of the
d, they had been placed for the purpose of
ng charity—were greater than ever had been
ered by the oldest inhabitant.

was the state of the parish when our poor
complained one day in school of severe illness.
ly symptoms of the prevailing epidemic were
own ; and on examining more closely into his
n, *it was clear that, according to the phrase-*

ology of the people, he had "got the faver on his back" — had caught "a heavy load of the faver." The Irish are particularly apprehensive of contagious maladies. The moment it had been discovered that Jemmy was infected, his schoolfellows avoided him with a feeling of terror scarcely credible, and the inhuman master was delighted at any circumstance, however calamitous, that might afford him a pretext for driving the friendless youth out of the school.

"Take," said he, "every thing belongin' to you out of my establishment: you were always a plague to me, but now more so than ever. Be quick, sarra, and nidificate for yourself somewhere else. Do you want to thranslate my siminary into an hospital, and myself into Lazarus, as president? Go off, you wild goose! and conjugate *ægrotō* wherever you find a convenient spot to do it in."

The poor boy silently and with difficulty arose, collected his books, and, slinging on his satchel, looked to his schoolfellows, as if he had said, "Which of you will afford me a place where to lay my aching head?" All, however kept aloof from him; he had caught the contagion, and the contagion, they knew, had swept the people away in vast numbers.

At length he spoke. "Is there any boy among you," he inquired, "who will bring me home? You know I am a stranger, an' far from my own, God help me!"

This was followed by a profound silence. Not one of those who had so often befriended him, or who would, on any other occasion, share their bed and their last morsel with him, would even touch his person, much less allow him, when thus plague-stricken, to take shelter under their roof. Such are the effects of selfishness, when it is opposed only by the force of those natural qualities that are not elevated into a sense of duty by clear and profound views of Christian truth. It is one thing to perform a kind action from constitutional impulse, and another to perform it as fixed duty, perhaps contrary to that impulse.

Jemmy, on finding himself avoided like a Hebre

of old, silently left the school, and walked on without knowing whither he should ultimately direct his steps. He thought of his friend the priest, but the distance between him and his place of abode was so far, he felt, than his illness would permit him to go.

He walked on, therefore, in such a state of weakness as can scarcely be conceived, much less decided. His head ached excessively, an intense pain like death-pangs through his lower back and his face was flushed, and his head giddy. In this state he proceeded, without money or friends; without a house to shelter him, or a bed on which to rest from his own relations, and with the prospect of death, under circumstances peculiarly dreadful, to him! He tottered on, however; the earth, as he imagined, reeling under him; the heavens, he thought, streaming with fire, and the earth indistinct and discoloured. Home, the paradise of the absent—the heaven of the affections—with all its tenderness and blessed sympathies, rushed upon his mind.

His father's deep but quiet kindness, his mother's sedulous love; his brothers, all that they were to him—these, with their thousand heart-warming associations, started into life before him again. But he was now ill, and the mother—the enduring sense of that mother's love placed rightest, and strongest, and tenderest, in the far distant group which his imagination bodied forth. "Mother!" he exclaimed—"oh, mother, why—why ever have you? Mother, the son you loved is without a kind word, lonely and neglected in a foreign land! Oh, my own mother! why did I ever leave you?"

The conflict between his illness and his affections came home to him; he staggered—he grasped as if for support at the vacant air—he fell, and lay for some time in a state of insensibility.))

The season was then that of midsummer, and early morn-
gows were falling before the scythe. As the boy lay on the earth, a few labourers were eating their

scanty dinner of bread and milk so near him that a dry low ditch ran between him and them. They had heard his words indistinctly, and one of them putting the milk bottle to his lips when, attracted by the voice, he looked in the direction of the speaker and saw him fall. They immediately recognised "poor scholar," and in a moment were attempting to recover him.

"Why thin, my poor fellow, what's a *shaughra* wid you?"

Jemmy started for a moment, looked about him, and asked, "Where am I?"

"Faith, thin, you're in Rory Connor's field, widin a few perches of the high road. But what ails you, poor boy? Is it sick you are?"

"It is," he replied; "I have got the faver. I had to lave school; none o' them would take me home, an' I doubt I must die in a Christian country under the open canopy of heaven. Oh, for God's sake, don't lave me! Bring me to some hospital, or into the next town, where people may know that I'm sick, an' maybe some kind Christian will relieve me."

The moment he mentioned "faver," the men involuntarily drew back, after having laid him reclining against the green ditch.

"Thin, thunder an' turf, what's to be done?" exclaimed one of them, thrusting his spread fingers into his hair. "Is the poor boy to die widout help among Christyeens like uz?"

"But hasn't he the sickness?" exclaimed another: "an' in that case, Pether, what's to be done?"

"Why, you gommoch, isn't that what I'm wantin' to know? You wor ever and always an ass, Paddy, except before you were born, an' thin you wor like Major M'Curragh, worse nor nothin'. Why the sarra do you be spakin' about the sickness, the Lord protect us, whin you know I'm so timersome of it?"

"But considher," said another, edging off from Jemmy, however, "that he's a poor scholar, an' that there's a great blessin' to them that assists the likes of him."

"Ay, is there that, sure enough, Dan ; but you see blur-an-age, what's to be done? He can't die this way, wid nobody wid him but himself."

"Let us help him !" exclaimed another, "for *God's* sake, an' we won't be apt to take it thin."

"Ay, but how can we help him, Frank? Oh, bedad, 'ud be a murdherin' shame, all out, to let the thur die by himself, widout company, so it uld."

"No one will take him in, for fraid o' the sickness. Ay, I'll tell you what we'll do:—Let us shkame the remainder of this day off o' the Major, an' build a bed for him on the road side here, jist agin the ditch. It's as dhry as powdher. Thin we can go through the ghbours, an' get them to sit near him time about, to bring him little *dhreeniens* o' nourishment."

"Divil a purtier! Come thin, let us get a lot of neighbours, an' set about it, poor bouchal. Who knows but it may bring down a blessin' upon us, her in this world or the next."

"Amin! I pray Gorra! an' so it will sure! doesn't Catechiz say it? 'There is but one Church,' says Catechiz, 'one Faith, an' one Baptism.' Bedad, there's a power o' fine larnin' in the same Catechiz, so there is, an' mighty improvin'."

An Irishman never works for wages with half the pluck which he displays when working for love. Ere many hours passed, a number of the neighbours had assembled, and Jemmy found himself on a bunch of straw, in a little shed erected for him at the edge of the road.

Perhaps it would be impossible to conceive a more wretched state of misery than that in which young Evoy found himself. Stretched on the side of the public road, in a shed formed of a few loose sticks covered over with "scraws," that is, the sward of the turf pared into thin stripes—removed above fifty paces from any human habitation—his body racked with a furious and oppressive fever—his mind conscious of all the horrors by which he was surrounded—

without the comforts even of a bed and bed-clothes—and, what was worst of all, those from whom he might expect kindness, afraid to approach him! Lying helpless, under these circumstances, it ought not to be wondered at, if he wished that death might at once close his extraordinary sufferings, and terminate those struggles which filial piety had prompted him to encounter.

This certainly is a dark picture, but our humble hero knew that even there the power and goodness of God could support him. The boy trusted in God; and when removed into his little shed, and stretched upon his clean straw, he felt that his situation was, in good sooth, comfortable when contrasted with what it might have been, if left to perish behind a ditch, exposed to the scorching heat of the sun by day, and the dews of heaven by night. He felt the hand of God even in this, and placed himself, with a short but fervent prayer, under his fatherly protection.

Irishmen, however, are not just that description of persons who can pursue their usual avocations, and see a fellow-creature die, without such attentions as they can afford him; not precisely so bad as that, gentle reader! Jemmy had not been two hours on his straw, when a second shed much larger than his own, was raised within a dozen yards of it. In this a fire was lit; a small pot was then procured, milk was sent in, and such other little comforts brought together, as they supposed necessary for the sick boy. Having accomplished these matters, a kind of guard was set to watch and nurse-tend him; a pitchfork was got, on the prongs of which they intended to reach him bread across the ditch; and a long-shafted shovel was borrowed, on which to furnish him drink with safety to themselves. That inextinguishable vein of humour, which in Ireland mingles even with death and calamity, was also visible here. The ragged half-starved creatures laughed heartily at the oddity of their own inventions, and enjoyed the ingenuity with which they made shift to meet the exigencies of the

without in the slightest degree having sympathy and concern for the afflicted youth

their arrangements were completed, one of (of the scythe) made a little whey, which, in spoon, he stirred with the end of his tobacco-pipe, then extended it across the ditch upon the other having put it in a tin porringer.

"You want a taste o' whey, avourneen?"

"No," replied Jemmy; "give me a drink for me."

"It is, a beuchal, on the shovel. Musha if you don't know what side you're lyin' an', or I'd be near your lips as I could. Come, man, be it be cast down at all at all; sure, bud-an-age, I'll give you the whay to you, any how."

"No," replied the boy—"oh, I have it. May I give it to you, whoever you are."

"No, if you want to know who I am, I'm Pether the mower. Be Gorra, poor boy, you mustn't be down at all at all. Sure the neighbours will be to watch an' take care of you. May I take the shovel?—an' they've built a brave snug shed for you, where they'll stay wid you time till you get well. We'll feed you wid whay as we've made up our minds to stale lots of milk for you. Ned Branagan an' I will milk the cows to-night, wid the help o' God. It's no sin in it, so there isn't, an' if there is, too, well there's no harm in it any way—for he's a good man, the same Rody. So, acushla, don't be in a hurry, for, be Gorra, you're sure o' the thinners, any how. Don't think you're dejected, you're not. It's all in regard o' bein' in this faver, or it's not this way you'd be; but, while ago, when you want anything, spake, still find two or three of us beside you here, any day. Now won't you promise to keep your word, when you know that we're beside you?"

"Bless you," replied Jemmy, you've taken a

weight off of my heart. I thought I'd die wid nobody near me at all."

"Oh, the sorra fear of it. Keep your heart up. We'll stale lots o' milk for you. Bad scan to the baste in the parish but we'll milk, sooner nor you'd want the whay, you crathur you."

The boy felt relieved, but his malady increased; and were it not that the confidence of being thus watched and attended to supported him, it is more than probable he would have sunk under it.

When the hour of closing the day's labour arrived, Major—— came down to inspect the progress which his mowers had made, and the goodness of the crop upon his meadows. No sooner was he perceived at a distance, than the scythes were instantly resumed, and the mowers pursued their employment with an appearance of zeal and honesty that could not be suspected.

On arriving at the meadows, however, he was evidently startled at the miserable day's work they had performed.

"Why, Connor," said he, addressing the nurse-tender, "how is this? I protest you have not performed half a day's labour! This is miserable and shameful."

"Bedad, Major, it's thrue for your honour, sure enough. It's a poor day's work, and never a doubt of it. But be all the books that never was opened or shut, busier men than we wor since mornin' couldn't be had for love or money. You see, Major, these meadows, bad look to them!—God pardon me for cursin' the harmless crathurs, for sure 'tisn't their fau't, Sir: but you see, Major, I'll insinse you into it. Now look here, your honour. Did you ever see deeper meadow nor that same, since you war foal—hem—since you war born, your honour? Maybe, your honour, Major, 'ud just take the scythe an' s thrive to cut a swaythe?"

"Nonsense, Connor; don't you know I cannot."

"Thin, be Gorra, Sir, I wish you could thry it. I'd

the book, we did more labour, an' worked harder
 ay, nor any day for the last fortnight. If it was
 grass, Sir—see here, Major, here's a light bit—
 look at how the scythe runs through it! Thin
 it here agin—just observe this, Major—why,
 her alive, don't you see how slow she goes
 th *that* where the grass is *heavy*! Bedad, Major,
 be made up this season wid your hay, any how.
 carry the finer meadow ever I put scythe in nor
 me meadow, God bless it!"

es, I see it, Connor; I agree with you as to its
 ess. But the reason of that is, Connor, that I
 s direct my steward myself in laying it down for

Yes, you're right, Connor; if the meadow were
 you could certainly mow comparatively a greater
 in a day."

the livin' farmer, God pardon me for swearin',
 pleasure to have dalins wid a gentleman like you,
 nows things as cute as if you war a mower your-
 our honour. Bedad, I'll go bail, Sir, it wouldn't
 d to tache you that same."

hy, to tell you the truth, Connor, you have hit
 pretty well. I'm beginning to get a taste for
 lture."

it," said Connor, scratching his head, "won't
 honour allow us the price of a glass, or a pint
 ther, for our hard day's work. Bad cess to me,
 ut this meadow 'ill play the puck wid us afore
 et it finished. Atween ourselves, Sir—if it
 in't be takin' freedoms—if you'd look to *your own*
 a' *yourself*. The steward, Sir, is a decent kind
 nan; but, sowl, he couldn't hould a candle to
 onour in seein' to the best way of doing a thing,
 Won't you allow us glasses a-piece, your honour?
 we're kilt entirely, so we are."

ere is half-a-crown among you, Connor; but
 get drunk."

hrunk! Musha, long may you reign, Sir! Be
 ythe in my hand, I'd rather—Och, faix your one
 ould sort, Sir,—the raal Irish gentleman, you

honour. An' sure your name's far and near for the any how."

Connor's face would have done the heart of Brool or Cruikshank good, had either of them seen charged with humour so rich as that which beamed from it, when the Major left them to enjoy their own comments upon what had happened.

"Oh, be the livin' farmer," said Connor, "are you alive at all afther *doin'* the Major! Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon you, Major darlin', but you are a *Manus*!*" The damn' rip o' the world, they wouldn't give the breath he breathes to the poor! God's sake, and he'll *threwn* a man half-a-crown that blarney him for farmin', and him doesn't know the differ atween a Cork-red an' a Yallow-leg,"†

"Faith, he's the boy that knows how to make Judy of himself any way, Pethur," exclaimed another.

"The divil a hapurth asier nor to give these Quakers the bag to hould, so there isn't. An' they think themselves so cute, too!"

"Augh!" said a third, "couldn't a man find the side o' them as asy as make out the way to his own nose, widout being led to it. Divil a sin it is to *them*, any way. Sure, he thinks we wor tooth an' nail at the meadow all day; an' me thought I'd never recover it, to see Pethur here—the rise he tuck out him! Ha, ha, ha—och, och, murdher, oh!"

"Faith," exclaimed Connor, "'twas good, you see to help the poor scholar; only for it we couldn't shkamin' the half-crown out of him. I think we ought to give the crathur half of it, an' him so sick: he'll wantin' it worse nor ourselves."

"Oh, be Gorra, he's fairly entitled to that. I've him fifteen pence."

"Surely!" they exclaimed unanimously. "The dher-an'-turf! wasn't he the manes of gettin' it for us!"

"Jemmy, a bouchal," said Connor, across the ditch to M'Evoy, "are you sleepin'?"

* A soft booby easily hoaxed.

† Different kinds of potatoes.

"Sleepin'! Oh, no," replied Jemmy; "I'd give the wide world for one wink of asy sleep."

"Well, aroon, here's fifteen pince for you, that we shkam—Will I tell him how we got it!"

"No don't," replied his neighbours; "the boy's given to devotion, an' maybe he might scruple to take it."

"Here's fifteen pince, avourneen, on the shovel, that we're givin' you *for God's sake*. If you *over** this, won't you offer up a prayer for us? Won't you, avick?"

"I can never forget your kindness," replied Jemmy, "I will always pray for you, and may God for ever bless you and yours!"

"Poor crathur! May the heavens above have prostration on him! Upon my sowl, it's good to have his blessin' an' his prayer. Now don't fret, Jemmy; we're lavin' you wid a lot o' neighbours here. They'll watch you time about, so that whin you want anything, call, avourneen, and there'll still be some one here to answer. God bless you, an' restore you, till we come wid the milk we'll stale for you, wid the help o' God. Bad cess to me, but it 'ud be a mortual sin, so it would, to let the poor boy die at all, an' him so far from home. For, as the Catechiz says, There is but one Faith, one Church, and one Baptism! Well, the readin' that's in that Catechiz is mighty improvin', glory be to God!"

It would be utterly impossible to detail the affliction which our poor scholar suffered in this wretched shed, for the space of a fortnight, notwithstanding the efforts of these kind-hearted people to render his situation comfortable.

The little wigwam they had constructed near him, was never, even for a moment, during his whole illness, without two or three persons ready to attend him. In the evening their numbers increased; a fire was always kept burning, over which a little pot for

* That is—to get over—to survive.

making whey or gruel was suspended. At night they amused each other with anecdotes and laughter, and occasionally with songs, when certain that their patient was not asleep. Their exertions to steal milk for him were performed with uncommon glee, and related among themselves with great humour. These thefts would have been unnecessary, had not the famine which then prevailed through the province been so excessive. The crowds that swarmed about the houses of wealthy farmers, supplicating a morsel to keep body and soul together, resembled nothing which our English readers ever had an opportunity of seeing. Ragged, emaciated creatures, tottered about with an expression of wildness and voracity in their gaunt features: fathers and mothers reeled under the burthen of their beloved children, the latter either sick, or literally expiring for want of food; and the widow, in many instances, was compelled to lay down her head to die, with the wail, the feeble wail, of her withered orphans mingling with her last moans! In such a state of things it was difficult to procure a sufficient quantity of milk to allay the unnatural thirst even of one individual, when parched by the scorching heat of a fever. Notwithstanding this, his wants were for the most part anticipated, so far as their means would allow them; his shed was kept waterproof; and either shovel or pitchfork always ready to be extended to him, by way of substitution for the right hand of fellowship.

When he called for anything, the usual observation was, "Husht! the crathur's callin'; I must take the shovel an' see what he wants."

There were times, it is true, when the mirth of the poor fellows was very low, for hunger was generally among themselves; there were times when their own little shed presented a touching and melancholy spectacle—perhaps we ought also to add, a noble one; for, to contemplate a number of men, considered rude and semi-barbarous, devoting themselves, in the midst of privations the most cutting and oppressive, to the

and preservation of a strange lad, merely because he knew him to be without friends and protection, is in itself a display of virtue truly magnanimous. The town on which some of the persons were occasionally compelled to live, was blood boiled up with a little zeal; for when a season of famine occurs in the land, the people usually bleed the cows and bullocks to reserve themselves from actual starvation. It is not a sight of appalling misery to behold feeble men gliding across the country, carrying their cans and pitchers, actually trampling upon fertility and grass, and collected in the corner of some grazier's field, waiting, gaunt, and ravenous as Ghouls, for their portion of blood. During these melancholy periods of want, everything in the shape of an esculent disappears. The miserable creatures will pick up chicken-bit, nettles, sorrell, bugloss, preshagh, and sea-weed, with which they will boil and eat with the voracity of lions writhing under the united agonies of hunger and death! Yet, singular to say, the very country which groaning under such a terrible sweep of famine is continually pouring from all her ports a profusion of provisions, day after day; flinging it from her fertile bosom in the wanton excess of a prodigal oppressed by misfortune.

In spite, however, of all that the poor scholar's life-guard suffered, he was attended with a fidelity and sympathy which no calamity could shake. His was this care fruitless; after the fever had passed through its usual stages, he began to recover. In fact, it has been observed very truly, that scarcely any person has been known to die under circumstances so far from those of the poor scholar. These sheds, the erection of which is not unfrequent in case of fever; have the advantage of pure free air, by which the patient is cooled and refreshed. Be the cause of what it may, the fact has been established, and we have satisfaction in being able to adduce our humble case as an additional proof of the many recoveries which take place in situations apparently so un-

favourable to human life. But how is it possible to detail what M'Evoy suffered during this fortnight of intense agony? Not those who can command the luxuries of life—not those who can reach its comforts—nor those who can supply themselves with its bare necessities—neither the cotter who struggles to support his wife and helpless children—the mendicant who begs from door to door—nor even the felon in his cell—can imagine what he felt in the solitary misery of his feverish bed. Hard is the heart that cannot *feel* his sorrows, when, stretched beside the common way, without a human face to look on, he called upon the mother, whose brain, had she known his situation, would have been riven—whose affectionate heart would have been broken by the knowledge of his affliction. It was a situation which afterwards appeared to him dark and terrible. The pencil of the painter could not depict it, nor the pen of the poet describe it, except like a dim vision, which neither the heart nor the imagination are able to give to the world as a tale steeped in the sympathies excited by reality.

His whole heart and soul, as he afterwards acknowledged, were, during his trying illness, *at home*. The voices of his parents, of his sisters, and of his brothers, were always in his ears; their countenances surrounded his cold and lonely bed; their hands touched him; their eyes looked upon him in sorrow—and their tears bedewed him. Even there, the light of his mother's love, though she herself was distant, shone upon his sorrowful couch; and he has declared, that in no past moment of affection did his soul ever burn with a sense of its presence so strongly as it did in the heart-dreams of his severest illness. But God is love, "and tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb."

Much of all his sufferings would have been alleviated, were it not that his two best friends in the parish, Thady and the curate, had been both prostrated by the fever at the same time with himself. There was consequently no person of respectability in

the neighbourhood cognisant of his situation. He was left to the humbler class of the peasantry, and honourably did they, with all their errors and ignorances, discharge those duties which greater wealth and greater knowledge would, probably, have left unperformed.

On the morning of the last day he ever intended to spend in the shed, at eleven o'clock, he heard the sounds of horses' feet passing along the road. The circumstance was one quite familiar to him; but these strangers, whoever they might be, stopped, and immediately after, two respectable looking men, dressed in black, approached him. His forlorn state and ghastly-wasted appearance startled them, and the younger of the two asked, in a tone of voice which went directly to his heart, how it was that they found him in a situation so desolate.

The kind interest implied by the words, and, probably, a sense of his utterly destitute state, affected him strongly, and he burst into tears. The strangers looked at each other, then at him; and if looks could express sympathy, theirs expressed it.

"My good boy," said the first, "how is it that we find you in a situation so deplorable and wretched as this? Who are you, or why is it that you have not a friendly roof to shelter you?"

"I'm a poor scholar," replied Jemmy, "the son of a poor but reduced parents: I came to this part of the country with the intention of preparing myself for Maynooth, and, if it might please God, with the hope of being able to raise them out of their distress."

The strangers looked more earnestly at the boy; sickness had touched his fine intellectual features into a purity of expression almost ethereal. His fair skin appeared nearly transparent, and the light of truth and candour lit up his countenance with a lustre which affliction could not dim.

The other stranger approached him more nearly, stopped for a moment, and felt his pulse.

"How long have you been in this country?" he inquired.

"Nearly three years."

"You have been ill of the fever which is so prevalent; but how did you come to be left to the chance of perishing upon the highway?"

"Why, Sir, the people were afraid to let me into their houses in consequence of the fever. I got ill in school, Sir, but no boy would venture to bring me home, an' the master turned me out, to die, I believe. May God forgive him!"

"Who was your master, my child?"

"The great Mr. —, Sir. If Mr. O'Brien, the curate of the parish, hadn't been ill himself at the same time, or if Mr. O'Rourke's son, Thady, hadn't been laid on his back, too, Sir, I wouldn't suffer what I did."

"Has the curate been kind to you?"

"Sir, only for him and the big boys I couldn't stay in the school, on account of the master's cruelty, particularly since my money was out."

"You are better now—are you not?" said the other gentleman.

"Thank God, Sir!—oh, thanks be to the Almighty, I am! I expect to be able to lave this place to-day or to-morrow."

"And where do you intend to go when you recover?"

The boy himself had not thought of this, and the question came on him so unexpectedly, that he could only reply—

"Indeed, Sir, I don't know."

"Had you," inquired the second stranger, "testimonials from your parish priest?"

"I had, Sir: they are in the hands of Mr. O'Brien. I also had a character from my father's landlord."

"But how," asked the other, "have you existed here during your illness? Have you been long sick?"

"Indeed I can't tell you, Sir, for I don't know how the time passed at all; but I know, Sir, that there

ways two or three people attendin' me. They e whatever they thought I wanted, upon a or a pitchfork, across the ditch, because they raid to come near me."

ng the early part of the dialogue, two or three s, or caubeens, might have been seen moving / over from the wigwam to the ditch which ide the shed occupied by M'Evoy. Here they ed stationary, for those who wore them were thin hearing of the conversation, and ready to air convalescent patient a good word, if neces-

w were you supplied with drink and medi-asked the younger of the two.

I've just told you, Sir," replied Jemmy; "the ours here let me want for nothing that they they kept me in more whey than I could use; y got me medicine, too, some way or other. leed, Sir, during a great part of the time I was n't say how they attended me: I wasn't sen-ir, of what was goin' on about me."

of those who lay behind the ditch now arose, er a few hems and scratchings of the head, d to join in the conversation.

y have you, my man," said the elder of the een acquainted with the circumstances of this ness?"

; the poor scholar, my Lord?* Oh thin bedad elf that has that. The poor crathur was in a way all out, so he was. He caught the faver chool beyant, one day, an' was turned out by er o' the world that he was larnin' from."

you one of the persons who attended him?" , och, the crathur! what could unsignified ike us do for him, barrin' a thrifle? Any how, d, it's the meracle o' the world that he was e to *over* it at all. Why, Sir, good luck to the

antry always address a Roman Catholic Bishop as "My Lord." {

one of him but suffered as much, wid the help o' God, as 'ud overcome fifty men !"

"How did you provide him with drink at such a distance from any human habitation ?"

"Throth, hard enough we found it, Sir, to do that same : but sure, whether or not, my Lord, we couldn't be sich nagers as to let him die all out, for want o' somethin' to moisten his throath wid."

"I hope," inquired the other, "you had nothing to do in the milk-stealing which has produced such an outcry in this immediate neighbourhood ?"

"Milk-stalin' ! Oh, bedad, Sir, there never was the likes known afore in the counthry. *The Lord forgive them that did it !* Be gorra, Sir, the wickedness o' the people's mighty improvin' if one 'ud take warnin' by it, glory be to God !"

"Many of the farmers' cows have been milked at night, Connor—perfectly drained. Even my own cows have not escaped ; and we who have suffered are determined, if possible, to ascertain those who have committed the theft. I, for my part, have gone even beyond my ability in relieving the wants of the poor, during this period of sickness and famine ; I therefore deserved this the less."

"By the powdher, your honour, if any gintleman desarved to have his cows *unmilked*, it's yourself. But, as I said this minute, there's no end to the wickedness o' the people, so there's not, although the Catechiz is against them ; for, says it, 'there is but one Faith, one Church, an' one Baptism.' Now, Sir, isn't it quare that people, wid such words in the book afore them, wont be guided by it ? I suppose they thought it only a *white* sin, Sir, to take the milk, the thieves o' the world."

"Maybe, your honour," said another, "that it was only to keep the life in some poor sick crathur that wanted it more nor you or the farmers, that they did it. There's some o' the same farmers desarve worse, for they're keepin' up the prices o' their male an'

ties upon the poor, an' did so all along, that they ght make money by our outhier distitution."

"That is no justification for theft," observed the <ver of the two. "Does any one among you suspect those who committed it in this instance? If I do, I command you, as your Bishop, to mention it."

"How, for instance," added the other, "were you able to supply this sick boy with whey during his illness?"))?

"Oh thin, gintlemen," replied Connor, dexterously trying the question, "but it's a mighty improvin' ng to see our own Bishop—God spare his Lordship us!—an' the Protestant minister o' the parish nin' together to relieve an' give good advice to the or! Bedad, it's settin' a fine example, so it is, to Quality, if they'd take patthorn by it."

"Reply," said the Bishop, rather sternly, "to the estions we have asked you."

"The quistions, your Lordship? It's proud an' ppy we'd be to do what you want; but the sarra in among us *can* do it, barrin' we'd say what we ght not to say. That's the thruth, my Lord; an' rely 'tisn't your Gracious Reverence that 'ud want to go beyant *that*?"

"Certainly not," replied the Bishop. "I warn you ainst both falsehood and fraud; two charges which ght frequently be brought against you in your tercourse with the gentry of the country, whom you dom scruple to deceive and mislead, by gliding into character, when speaking to them, that is often the verse of your real one; whilst, at the same time, you e both honest and sincere to persons of your own ss. Put away this practice, for it is both sinful d discreditable."

"God bless your Lordship! an' many thanks to ur Gracious Reverence for advisin' us! Well we ow that it's the blessed thing to folly your words."

"Bring over that naked, starved-looking man, who stirring the fire under that pot," said the Rector. He looks like *famine itself*."

"Paddy Dunn! will you come over here to his honour, Paddy! He's goin' to give you somethin'," said Connor, adding of his own accord the last clause of the message.

The tattered creature approached him with a gleam of expectation in his eyes that appeared like insanity.

"God bless your honour for your goodness!" exclaimed Paddy. "It's me that's in it, Sir!—Paddy Dunn, Sir, sure enough; but, indeed, I'm the next thing to my own ghost, Sir, now, God help me!"

"What, and for whom, are you cooking?"

"Jist the smallest dhrop in life, Sir, o' gruel, to keep the sowl in that lonely crathur, Sir, the poor scholar."

"Pray, how long is it since you have eaten anything yourself?"

The tears burst from the eyes of the miserable creature as he replied—

"Before God in glory, your honour, an' in the presence of his Lordship here, I only got about what 'ud make betther nor half a male widin the last day, Sir. 'Twas a weeshy grain o' male that I got from a friend; an' as Ned Connor here tould me that this crathur had nothin' to make the gruel for him, why I shared it wid him, bekase he couldn't even beg it, Sir, if he wanted it, an' him not able to walk yit."

The worthy pastor's eyes glistened with a moisture that did him honour. Without a word of observation he slipped a crown into the hand of Dunn, who looked at it as if he had been paralysed.

"Oh thin," said he, fervently, "may every hair on your honour's head become a mould-candle to light you into glory! The world's goodness is in your heart, Sir; and may all the blessin's of Heaven rain down upon you an' yours!"

The two gentlemen then gave assistance to the poor scholar, whom the Bishop addressed in kind and encouraging language:—

"Come to me, my good boy," he added, "and if, on *further inquiry*, I find that your conduct has been

as I believe it to have been, you may rest assured, provided also you *continue* worthy of my opinion, that I shall be a friend and a protector to you. Call on me when you get well, and I will be to you at greater length."

"Well," observed Connor, when they were gone, divil's own hard puzzle the Bishop had me in stallin' the milk. It wint agin the grain wid me to tell *him* the lie, so I had to invint a bit o' to keep my conscience clear; for sure there was a man among us that *could* tell him, barrin' we that we *oughtn't* to say. Doesn't all the world think that a man oughtn't to *condim* himself? That's the *thruth*, any way; but divil a scruple I'd have in me 'bout the other—not but that he's one o' the best sort. Paddy Dunn, quit lookin' at that crown, an' get the shovel an' give the boy his dhrink—he's n' it."

The agitation of spirits produced by Jemmy's cheerless interview with the Bishop was, for two or three days afterwards, somewhat prejudicial to his conscience. In less than a week, however, he was comfortably settled with Mr. O'Rourke's family, whose kindness proved to him quite as warm as he had needed.

When he had remained with them a few days, he began to recommence his studies under his tyrant master. He certainly knew that his future attendance at school would be penal to him, but he had not looked forward to the accomplishment of his task as a task of difficulty and distress. The severity expected from the master could not, he thought, be greater than that which he had already suffered; therefore, decided, if possible, to complete his education under him.

The school, when Jemmy appeared in it, had been more than an hour assembled, but the thinness of attendance not only proved the woful prevalence of sickness and distress in the parish, but sharpened the pedagogue's vinegar aspect into an expression of

countenance singularly peevish and gloomy. When the lad entered, a murmur of pleasure and welcome ran through the scholars, and joy beamed forth from every countenance but that of his teacher. When the latter noticed this, his irritability rose above restraint, and he exclaimed—

“Silence! and apply to business, or I shall cause some of you to denude immediately. No school ever can prosper in which that *hirudo*, called a poor scholar, is permitted toleration. I thought, sarrah, I told you to nidificate and hatch your wild project undher some other wing than mine.”

“I only entrate you,” replied our poor hero, “to suffer me to join the class I left while I was sick, for about another year. I’ll be very quiet and humble, and, as far as I can, will do everything you wish me.”

“Ah! you are a crawling reptile,” replied the savage, “and, in my opinion, nothing but a chate and impostor. I think you have imposed yourself upon Mr. O’Brien for what you are not; that is, the son of an honest man. I have no doubt but many of your nearest relations died after having seen their own funerals. Your mother, you runagate, wasn’t your father’s wife, I’ll be bail.”

The spirit of the boy could bear this no longer; his eyes flashed, and his sinews stood out in the energy of deep indignation.

“It is false,” he exclaimed; “it is as false as your own cruel and cowardly heart, you wicked and unprincipled tyrant! In everything you have said of my father, mother, and friends, and of myself, too, you are a liar, from the hat on your head to the dirt undher your feet—a liar, a coward, and a villain!”

The fury of the miscreant was ungovernable: he ran at the still feeble lad, and, by a stroke of his fist, dashed him senseless to the earth. There were now no large boys in the school to curb his resentment, he, therefore, kicked him in the back when he fell. Many voices exclaimed in alarm—“Oh, masther!

Sir! don't kill him! Oh, Sir! dear, don't kill him! Don't kill poor Jemmy, Sir, an' him still sick!"

"Kill him!" replied the master; "kill him, indeed! Faith, he'd be no common man who could kill him; he has as many lives in him as a cat! Sure, he can live behind a ditch, wid the faver on his back, widout dying; and he would live if he was stuck n the spire of a steeple."

In the mean time the boy gave no symptoms of returning life, and the master, after desiring a few of the scholars to bring him out to the air, became pale as death wih apprehension. He immediately withdrew to his private apartment, which joined the school-room, and sent out his wife to assist in restoring him to animation. With some difficulty this was accomplished. The unhappy boy at once remembered what had just occurred; and the bitter tears gushed from his eyes, as he knelt down, and exclaimed, "Merciful Father of heaven and earth, have pity on me! You see my heart, great God! and that what I did, I did or the best!"

"Avourneen," said the woman, "he's passionate, n' never mind him. Come in an' beg his pardon for allin' him a liar, an' I'll become spokesman for you myself. Come, acushla, an' I'll get lave for you to stay in the school still."

"Oh, I'm hurted!" said the poor youth: "I'm hurted inwardly—somewhere about the back, and bout my ribs!" The pain he felt brought the tears down his pale cheeks. "I wish I was at home!" said he. "I'll give up all and go home!" The lonely boy then laid his head upon his hands, as he sat on the ground, and indulged in a long burst of sorrow.

"Well," said a manly-looking little fellow, whilst the tears stood in his eyes, "I'll tell my father this, ny how. I know he won't let me come to this school ny more. Here, Jemmy, is a piece of my bread, maybe it will do you good."

"I couldn't taste it, Frank dear," said Jemmy; "God bless you! but I couldn't taste it."

"Do," said Frank ; "maybe it will bate back the pain."

"Don't ask me, Frank dear," said Jemmy ; "I couldn't ate it : I'm hurted inwardly."

"Bad luck to me!" exclaimed the indignant boy "if ever my ten toes will darken this school door agin. By the livin' farmer, if they ax me at home to do it, I'll run away to my uncle's, so I will. Wait, Jemmy, I'll be big yit ; an', be the blessed farmer, I'll give the same masther a shirtful of sore bones, the holy an' blessed minute I'm able to do it."

Many of the other boys declared that they would acquaint their friends with the master's cruelty to the poor scholar ; but Jemmy requested them not to do so, and said that he was determined to return home the moment he should be able to travel.

The affrighted woman could not prevail upon him to seek a reconciliation with her husband, although the expressions of the other scholars induced her to press him to it, even to entreaty. Jemmy arose, and with considerable difficulty reached the Curate's house, found him at home, and, with tears in his eyes, related to him the atrocious conduct of the master.

"Very well," said this excellent man, "I am glad that I can venture to ride as far as Colonel B to-morrow. You must accompany me ; for, decidedly, such brutality cannot be permitted to go unpunished."

Jemmy knew that the Curate was his friend ; and, although he would not himself have thought of summoning the master to answer for his barbarity, yet he acquiesced in the curate's opinion. He stopped that night in the house of the worthy man to whom Mr. O'Brien had recommended him on his first entering the town. It appeared in the morning, however, that he was unable to walk ; the blows which he had received were *then* felt by him to be more dangerous than had been supposed. Mr. O'Brien, on being informed of this, procured a jaunting-car, on which they both sat, and, at an easy pace, reached the Colonel's residence.

The Curate was shown into an ante-room, and Jemmy sat in the hall: the Colonel joined the former in a few minutes. He had been in England and on the Continent, accompanied by his family, for nearly the last three years, but had just returned, in order to take possession of a large property in land and money, to which he succeeded at a very critical moment, for his own estates were heavily encumbered. He was now proprietor of an additional estate, the rent-roll of which was six thousand per annum, and also master of eighty-five thousand pounds in the funds.

Mr. O'Brien, after congratulating him upon his good fortune, introduced the case of our hero as one which, in his opinion, called for the Colonel's interposition as a magistrate.

"I have applied to you, Sir," he proceeded, "rather than to any other of the neighbouring gentlemen, because I think this friendless lad has a peculiar claim upon any good offices you could render him."

"A claim upon me! How is that, Mr. O'Brien?"

"The boy, Sir, is not a native of this province. His father was formerly a tenant of yours, a man, as I have reason to believe, remarkable for good conduct and industry. It appears that his circumstances, so long as he was your tenant, were those of a comfortable independent farmer. If the story which his son relates be true—and I, for one, believe it—his family have been dealt with in a manner unusually cruel and iniquitous. Your present agent, Colonel, who is known in his own neighbourhood by the nickname of *Yellow Sam*, thrust him out of his farm, when his wife was sick, for the purpose of putting into it a man who had married his illegitimate daughter. If this be found a correct account of the transaction, I have no hesitation in saying that you, Colonel B—, as a gentleman of honour and humanity, will investigate the conduct of your agent, and see justice done to an honest man, who must have been oppressed in your name, and under colour of your authority."

"If my agent has dared to be unjust to a worthy

tenant," said the Colonel, "in order to provide for his bastard, by my sacred honour, he shall cease to be an agent of mine! I admit, certainly, that from some circumstances which transpired a few years ago, I have reason to suspect his integrity. That, to be sure, was only so far as he and I were concerned; but, on the other hand, during one or two visits I made to the estate which he manages, I heard the tenants thank and praise him with much gratitude, and all that sort of thing. There was, 'Thank your honour!'—'Long may you reign over us, Sir!'—and, 'Oh, Colonel, you've a mighty good man to your agent!'" and so forth. I do not think, Mr. O'Brien, that he has acted so harshly, or that he would dare to do it. Upon my honour, I heard those warm expressions of gratitude from the lips of the tenants themselves."

"If you knew the people in general, Colonel, so well, as I do," replied the Curate, "you would admit that such expressions are often either cuttingly ironical, or the result of fear. You will always find, Sir, that the independent portion of the people have least of this forced dissimulation among them. A dishonest and inhuman agent has in his own hands the irresponsible power of harassing and oppressing the tenantry under him. The class most hateful to the people, are those low wretches who spring up from nothing into wealth, accumulated by dishonesty and rapacity. They are proud, overbearing, and jealous, even to vindictiveness, of the least want of respect. It is to such upstarts that the poorer classes are externally most civil; but it is also such persons whom they most hate and abhor. They flatter them to their faces, 'tis true, even to *nausea*; but they seldom spare them in their absence. Of this very class, I believe, is your agent, Yellow Sam; so that any favourable expressions you may have heard from your tenantry towards him, were most probably the result of dissimulation and fear. Besides, Sir, here is a testimonial from M'Evoy's parish-priest, in which his

father is spoken of as an honest, moral, and industrious man."

"If what you say, Mr. O'Brien, be correct," observed the Colonel, "you know the Irish peasantry much better than I do. Decidedly, I have always thought them in conversation exceedingly candid and sincere. With respect to testimonials from priests to landlords on behalf of their tenants, upon my honour I am sick of them. I actually received, about four years ago, such an excellent character of two tenants, as induced me to suppose them worthy of encouragement. But what was the fact? Why, Sir, they were two of the greatest firebrands on my estate, and put both me and my agent to great trouble and expense. No, Sir, I wouldn't give a curse for a priest's testimonial upon such an occasion. These fellows were subsequently convicted of arson on the clearest evidence, and hanged."

"Well, Sir, I grant that you may have been misled in that instance. However, from what I've observed, the two great faults of Irish landlords are these:—In the first place, they suffer themselves to remain ignorant of their tenantry; so much so, indeed, that they frequently deny them access and redress when the poor people are anxious to acquaint them with their grievances; for it is usual with landlords to refer them to those very agents against whose cruelty and rapacity they are appealing. This is a *carte blanche* to the agent to trample upon them if he pleases. In the next place, Irish landlords too frequently employ ignorant and needy men to manage their estates; men who have no character, no property, or standing in society, beyond the reputation of being keen, shrewd, and active. These persons, Sir, make fortunes; and what means can they have of accumulating wealth, except by cheating either the landlord or his tenants, or both? A history of their conduct would be a black catalogue of dishonesty, oppression, and treachery. Respectable men, resident on or near the estate, possessing both character and property, should

always be selected for this important trust above all things, the curse of a tenantry percentage agent. He racks, and drives, and orders without consideration either of market or price, in order that his receipts may be ample, and his income large."

"Why, O'Brien, you appear to be better acquainted with all this sort of thing than I, who am a proprietor."

"By the by, Sir, without meaning you disrespect, it is the landlords of Ireland who know about the great mass of its inhabitants; and also add, about its history, its literature, the habits of the people, their customs, and their prejudices. The peasantry know this, and too often practice their ignorance. There is a landlord's *Vade mecum* sadly wanted in Ireland, Colonel."

"Ah! very good, O'Brien, very good! We will certainly inquire into this case, and if I find Yellow Sam has been playing the oppressor's game goes. I am now able to manage him, which I could not readily do before, for, by the by, he had no business on my property."

"I would take it, Colonel, as a personal favour if you would investigate the transaction I have mentioned."

"Undoubtedly I shall, and that very soon. I am sorry about this outrage committed against the boy. We had better take his informations, and put him in the mill-fellow."

"Certainly; I think that is the best way to deal with such conduct to the poor youth has been mercifully detestable. We must put him out of this parish country."

"Call the lad in. In this case I shall draw up informations myself, although Gregg usually does that."

Jemmy, assisted by the Curate, entered the room, and the humane Colonel desired him, as he was ill, to sit down.

at is your name?" asked the Colonel.
 "I'm the son, Sir,
 in who was once a tenant of yours."
 "and pray how did he cease to be a tenant of

y, Sir, your agent, Yallow Sam, put him out of
 n, when my poor mother was on her sick-bed.
 ted my father, Sir, out of some money—part
 ent it was, that he didn't give him a receipt
 Then my father went to him afterwards for the

Yallow Sam abused him, and called him a
 and that, Sir, was what no man ever called
 her either before or since. My father, Sir,
 ed to tell you about it, and you came to the
 soon after; but Yallow Sam got very great
 father at that time, and sent him to sell bul-
 r him about fifty miles off, but when he came
 ain you had left the country. Thin, Sir,
 Sam said nothing till the next half-year's rent
 due, when he came down on my father for all
 s, what he hadn't got the receipt for, and the
 ale—and, without any warning in the world,
 out. My father offered to pay all; but he
 was a rogue, and that you had ordered him off
 te. In less than a week after this he put a
 it married a bastard daughter of his own into
 use and place. That's God's truth, Sir; and
 nd it so, if you enquire into it. It's a common
 his to keep back receipts, and make the
 pay double."*

red Heaven, O'Brien! can this be possible?"
 ur best way, Colonel, is to inquire into it."
 s not your father able to educate you at home,
 ?"

Sir. We soon got into poverty after we
 r farm; and another thing, Sir, there was no
 school in our neighbourhood."

*s a fact. The individual here alluded to, frequently kept back
 when receiving rents, under pretence of hurry, and afterwards
 the tenants to pay the same gale twice!*

"For what purpose did you become a poor scholar?"

"Why, Sir, I hoped one day or other to be able to raise my father and mother out of the distress that Yallow Sam brought on us."

"What a noble aim, and a noble sentiment. And what has this d—d fellow of a schoolmaster done to you?"

"Why, Sir, yesterday when I went back to the school, he abused me, and said he supposed most of my relations were hanged; spoke ill of my father; and said that my mother"—Here the tears started to his eyes—he sobbed aloud.

"Go on, and be cool," said the Colonel. "What did he say of your mother?"

"He said, Sir, that she was never married to my father. I know I was wrong, Sir; but if it was the king on his throne that said it of my mother, I'd call him a liar. I called *him* a liar, and a coward, and a villain: ay, Sir, and if I had been able, I would have trampled him under my feet."

The Colonel looked steadily at him, but the open clear eye which the boy turned upon him was full of truth and independence.

"And you will find," said the soldier, "that this spirited defence of your mother will be the most fortunate action of your life. Well; he struck you then, did he?"

"He knocked me down, Sir, with his fist—then kicked me in the back and sides. I think some of my ribs are broke."

"Ay!—no doubt, no doubt," said the Colonel. "And you were only after recovering from this fever which is so prevalent?"

"I wasn't a week out of it, Sir."

"Well, my boy, we shall punish him for you."

"Sir, would you hear me for a word or two, if it would be pleasing to you?"

"Speak on," said the Colonel.

"I would rather change his punishment to—I would—that is—if it would be agreeable to you—It's

this, Sir—I wouldn't trouble you now against the master, if you'd be pleased to rightify my father, and punish Yallow Sam. Oh, Sir, for God's sake, put my heart-broken father into his farm again! If you would, Sir, I could shed my blood, or lay down my life for you, or for any belonging to you. I'm but a poor boy, Sir, low and humble; but they say there's a greater Being than the greatest in this world, that listens to the just prayers of the poor and friendless. I was never happy, Sir, since we left it—neither was any of us; and when we'd sit cowl'd and hungry, about our hearth, we used to be talking of the pleasant days we spent in it, till the tears would be smothered in curses against him that put us out of it. Oh, Sir, if you could know all that a poor and honest family suffers, when they are thrown into distress by want of feeling in their landlords, or by the dishonesty of agents, you would consider my father's case. I'm his favourite son, Sir, and good right have I to speak for him. If you could know the sorrow, the misery, the drooping down of the spirits, that lies upon the countenances and the hearts of such people, you wouldn't, as a man and a Christian, think it below you to spread happiness and contentment among them again. In the morning they rise to a day of hardship, no matter how bright and cheerful it may be to others—nor is there any hope of a brighter day for *them*; and at night they go to their hard beds to strive to sleep away their hunger in spite of cowl'd and want. If you could see how the father of a family, after striving to bear up, sinks down at last; if you could see the look he gives at the childre that he would lay down his heart's blood for, when they sit naked and hungry about him; and the mother, too, with her kind word and sorrowful smile, proud of them in all their destitution, but her heart breaking silently all the time, her face wasting away, her eye dim, and her strength gone!—Sir, make one such family happy—for all this has been in my father's house! Give us back our light spirits, our

pleasant days, and our cheerful hearts again! We lost them through the villany of your agent. Give them back to us, for you *can* do it; but you can *never* pay us for what we suffered. Give us, Sir, our farm, our green fields, our house, and every spot and nook that we had before. We love the place, Sir, for its own sake;—it is the place of our fathers, and our hearts are in it. I often think I see the smooth river that runs through it, and the meadows that I played in when I was a child;—the glen behind our house, the mountains that rose before us when we left the door, the thorn-bush at the garden, the hazels in the glen, the little bleach-green beside the river—Oh, Sir, don't blame me for crying, for they are all before my eyes, in my ears, and in my heart! Many a summer evening have I gone to the march-ditch of the farm that my father's now in, and looked at the place I loved, till the tears blinded me, and I asked it as a favour of God to restore us to it! Sir, we are in great poverty at home; before God we are; and my father's heart is breaking."

The Colonel drew his breath deeply, rubbed his hands, and as he looked at the fine countenance of the boy—expressing, as it did, enthusiasm and sorrow—his eye lightened with a gleam of indignation. It could not be against the poor scholar; no, gentle reader, but against his own agent.

"O'Brien," said he, "what do you think? And this noble boy is the son of a man who belongs to a class of which I am ignorant! I swear that we landlords are, I fear, a guilty race."

"Not all, Sir," replied the Curate. "There are noble exceptions among them; their faults are more the faults of omission than commission."

"Well, well, no matter. Come, I will draw up the informations against this man; afterwards I have something to say to you, my boy," he added, addressing Jenmy, "that will not, I trust, be unpleasant."

He then drew up the informations as strongly as he could word them, after which Jenmy deposed to their

ruth and accuracy, and the Colonel, rubbing his hands again, said—

“I will have the fellow secured. When you go into town, Mr. O'Brien, I'll thank you to call on Meares, and hand him these. He will lodge the miscreant in limbo this very night.”

Jemmy then thanked him, and was about to withdraw, when the Colonel desired him to remain a little longer.

“Now,” said he, “your father has been treated inhumanly, I believe; but no matter. That is not the question. Your sentiments, and conduct, and your affection for your parents are noble, my boy. At present, I say, the question is not whether the history of your father's wrongs be true or false; you, at least, *believe* it to be true. From this forward—but by the by, I forgot; how could your becoming a poor scholar relieve your parents?”

“I intended to become a priest, Sir, and then to help them.”

“Ay! so I thought; and, provided your father were restored to his farm, would you be still disposed to become a priest?”

“I would, Sir; next to helping my father, that is what I wish to be.”

“O'Brien, what would it cost to prepare him respectably for the priesthood?—I mean, to defray his expenses until he completes his preparatory education, in the first place, and afterwards during his residence in Maynooth?”

“I think two hundred pounds, Sir, would do it easily and respectably.”

“I do not think it would. However, do you send him—but first let me ask what progress he has already made?”

“He has read—in fact, he *is* nearly prepared to enter Maynooth. His progress has been very rapid.”

“Put him to some respectable boarding-school for a year; then let him enter Maynooth, and I will bear the *expense*. But, remember, I do not adopt this

course in consequence of his father's history. Not I, by Jupiter ; I do it on his own account. He is a noble boy, and full of fine qualities, if they be not nipped by neglect and poverty. I loved my father myself, and fought a duel on his account ; and I honour the son who has spirit to defend his absent parent."

"This is a most surprising turn in the boy's fortunes, Colonel."

"He deserves it. A soldier, Mr. O'Brien, is not without his enthusiasm, nor can he help admiring it in others, when nobly and virtuously directed. To see a boy, in the midst of poverty, encountering the hardships and difficulties of life, with the hope of raising up his parents from distress to independence, has a touch of sublimity in it."

"Ireland, Colonel, abounds with instances of similar virtue, brought out, probably, into fuller life and vigour by the sad changes and depressions which are weighing down the people. In her glens, on her bleak mountain sides, and in her remotest plains, such examples of pure affection, uncommon energy, and humble heroism, are to be seen ; but, unfortunately, few persons of rank or observation mingle with the Irish people, and their many admirable qualities pass away without being recorded in the literature of their country. They are certainly a strange people, Colonel, almost an anomaly in the history of the human race. They are the only people who can rush out from the very virtues of private life to the perpetration of crimes at which we shudder. There is, to be sure, an outcry about their oppression ; but that is wrong. Their indigence and ignorance are rather the result of neglect ;—of neglect, Sir, from the government of the country—from the earl to the squireen. They have been taught little that is suitable to their stations and duties in life, either as tenants who cultivate our lands, or as members of moral or Christian society."

"Well, well : I believe what you say is too true.

touching the records of virtue in humble life, who would record it when nothing goes down-days but what is either monstrous or fashion-

ery true, Colonel; yet, in my humble opinion, a us Irish peasant is far from being so low a ster as a profligate man of rank."

Well, well, well! Come, O'Brien, we will drop the t. In the meantime, touching this boy, as I he must be looked to, for he has that in him ough not to be neglected. We shall now see his d—d pedagogue be punished for his cruelty." worthy Colonel in a short time dismissed poor y with an exulting heart; but not until he had l a sufficient sum in the Curate's hands for ng him to make a respectable appearance. al advice was also procured for him, by which oner overcame the effects of his master's ity.

their way home Jemmy related to his friend the rsation which he had had with his Bishop in the and the kind interest which that gentleman had in his situation and prospects. Mr. O'Brien im that the Bishop was an excellent man, pos- g much discrimination and benevolence; "and id he, "is the Protestant clergyman who accom- d him. They have both gone among the people g this heavy visitation of disease and famine, istering advice and assistance; restraining them those excesses which they sometimes commit, , driven by hunger, they attack provision-carts, s' shops, or the houses of farmers who are known ssess a stock of meal or potatoes. God knows, n excusable kind of robbery; yet it is right to in them."

is a pleasant thing, Sir, to see clergymen of religion working together to make the people r."

is certainly so," replied the Curate; "and I am d to say, in justice to the Protestant clergy, that

there is no class of men in Ireland, James, who do *so much* good without distinction of creed or party. They are generally kind and charitable to the poor; so are their wives and daughters. I have often known them to cheer the sick-bed—to assist the widow and the orphan—to advise and admonish the profligate, and, in some instances, even to reclaim them. But now about your own prospects; I think you should go and see your family as soon as your health permits you."

"I would give my right hand," replied Jemmy, "just to see them, if it was only for five minutes: but I cannot go. I vowed that I would never enter my native parish until I should become a Catholic clergyman. I vowed that, Sir, to God—and with his assistance I will keep my vow."

"Well," said the Curate, "you are right. And now let me give you a little advice. In the first place, learn to speak as correctly as you can; lay aside the vulgarisms of conversation peculiar to the common people; and speak precisely as you would write. By the by, you acquitted yourself to admiration with the Colonel. A little stumbling there was in the beginning; but you got over it. You see, James, the force of truth and simplicity. I could scarcely restrain my tears while you spoke."

"If I had not been in earnest, Sir, I could never have spoken as I did."

"You never could. Truth, James; is the foundation of all eloquence; he who knowingly speaks what is not true, may dazzle and perplex; but he will never touch with that power and pathos which spring from truth. Fiction is successful only by borrowing her habiliments. Now, James, for a little more advice. Don't let the idea of having been a poor scholar deprive you of self-respect; neither let your unexpected turn of fortune cause you to forget what you have suffered. Hold a middle course; be firm and independent; without servility on the one hand, or vanity on the other. You have also too much good sense,

and, I hope, too much religion, to ascribe what this day has brought forth in your behalf, to any other cause than God. It has pleased him to raise you from misery to ease and comfort ; to him, therefore, be it referred, and to him be your thanks and prayers directed. You owe him much, for you now can perceive the value of what he has done for you ! May his name be blessed !”

Jemmy was deeply affected by the kindness of his friend, for such, in friendship's truest sense, was he to him. He expressed the obligations which he owed him, and promised to follow the excellent advice he had just received.

The schoolmaster's conduct to the poor scholar had, before the close of the day on which it occurred, been known through the parish. Thady O'Rorke, who had but just recovered from the epidemic, felt so bitterly exasperated at the outrage, that he brought his father to the parish priest, to whom he gave a detailed account of all that our hero and the poorer children of the school had suffered. In addition to this, he went among the more substantial farmers of the neighbourhood, whose co-operation he succeeded in obtaining, for the laudable purpose of driving the tyrant out of the parish.

Jemmy, who still lived at the “House of Entertainment,” on hearing what they intended to do, begged Mr. O'Brien to allow him, provided the master should be removed from the school, to decline prosecuting him.

“He has been cruel to me, no doubt,” he added ; “still I cannot forget that his cruelty has been the means of changing my condition in life so much for the better. If he is put out of the parish it will be punishment enough ; and, to say the truth, Sir, I can *now* forgive everybody. Maybe, had I been still *neglected* I might punish him ; but, in the meantime, to show him and the world that I didn't deserve his severity, I forgive him.”

Mr. O'Brien was not disposed to check a sentiment

that did the boy's heart so much honour ; he waited on the Colonel the next morning, acquainted him with Jemmy's wishes, and the indictment was quashed immediately after the schoolmaster's removal from his situation.

Our hero's personal appearance was by this time incredibly changed for the better. His countenance, naturally expressive of feeling, firmness, and intellect, now appeared to additional advantage ; so did his whole person, when dressed in a decent suit of black. No man acquainted with life can be ignorant of the improvement which genteel apparel produces in the carriage, tone of thought, and principles of an individual. It gives a man confidence, self-respect, and a sense of equality with his companions ; it inspires him with energy, independence, delicacy of sentiment, courtesy of manner, and elevation of language. The face becomes manly, bold, and free ; the brow open, and the eye clear ; there is no slinking through narrow lanes and back streets : but, on the contrary, the smoothly dressed man steps out with a determination not to spare the earth, or to walk as if he trod on eggs or razors. No ; he brushes onward ; is the first to accost his friends ; gives a careless bow to this, a bluff nod to that, and a patronising "how d'ye do" to a third, who is worse dressed than himself. Trust me, kind reader, that good clothes are calculated to advance a man in life nearly as much as good principles, especially in a world like this, where external appearance is taken as the exponent of what is beneath it.

Jemmy, by the advice of his friend, now waited upon the Bishop, who was much surprised at the uncommon turn of fortune which had taken place in his favour. He also expressed his willingness to help him forward, as far as lay in his power, towards the attainment of his wishes. In order to place the boy directly under suitable patronage, Mr. O'Brien suggested that the choice of the school should be left to the Bishop. This, perhaps, flattered him a little, for who is without his weaknesses ? A school near the

metropolis was accordingly fixed upon, to which Jemmy, now furnished with a handsome outfit, was accordingly sent. There we will leave him, reading with eagerness and assiduity, whilst we return to look after Colonel B. and his agent.

One morning after James's departure, the Colonel's servant waited upon Mr. O'Brien with a note from his master, intimating a wish to see him. He lost no time in waiting upon that gentleman, who was then preparing to visit the estate which he had so long neglected.

"I am going," said he, "to see how my agent, Yellow Sam, as they call him, and my tenants agree. It is my determination, Mr. O'Brien, to investigate the circumstances attending the removal of our *protégé's* father. I shall, moreover, look closely into the state and feelings of my tenants in general. It is probable I shall visit many of them, and certain that I will inquire into the character of this man."

"It is better late than never, Colonel; but still, though I am a friend to the people, yet I would recommend you to be guided by great caution, and the evidence of respectable and disinterested men only. You must not certainly entertain all the complaints you may hear, without clear proof, for I regret to say, that too many of the idle and political portion of the peasantry are apt to throw the blame of their own folly and ignorance—yes, and of their crimes, also—upon those who in no way have occasioned either their poverty or their wickedness. They are frequently apt to consider themselves oppressed, if concessions are not made, to which they, as idle and indolent men, who neglect their own business, have no fair claim. Bear this in mind, Colonel—be cool, use discrimination, take your proofs from others besides the parties concerned, or their friends, and, depend upon it, you will arrive at the truth."

"O'Brien, you would make an excellent agent."

"I have studied the people, Sir, and know them. I have breathed the atmosphere of their prejudices,

habits, manners, customs, and superstitions. I have felt them all myself, as they feel them ; but I trust I have got above their influence where it is evil, for there are many fine touches of character among them, which I should not willingly part with. No, Sir, I should make a bad agent, having no capacity for transacting business. I could direct and overlook, but nothing more."

"Well, then, I shall set out to-morrow ; and in the meantime, permit me to say that I am deeply sensible of your kindness in pointing out my duty as an Irish landlord, conscious that I have too long neglected it."

"What stay do you intend to make, Colonel ?"

"I think about a month. I shall visit some of my old friends there, from whom I expect a history of the state and feelings of the country."

"You will hear both sides of the question before you act ?"

"Certainly. I have written to my agent to say that I shall look very closely into my own affairs on *this* occasion. I thought it fair to give him notice."

"Well, Sir, I wish you all success."

"Farewell, Mr. O'Brien ; I shall see you immediately after my return."

The Colonel performed his journey by slow stages, until he reached "the hall of his fathers,"—for it was such, although he had not for years resided in it. It presented the wreck of a fine old mansion, situated within a crescent of stately beeches, whose moss-covered and ragged trunks gave symptoms of decay and neglect. The lawn had been once beautiful, and the demesne a noble one ; but that which blights the industry of the tenant—the curse of absenteeism—had also left the marks of ruin stamped upon every object around him. The lawn was little better than a common : the pond was thick with weeds and sluggish water-plants, that almost covered its surface ; and a light elegant bridge, that spanned a river which ran before the house, was also moss-grown and dilapi-

dated. The hedges were mixed up with briars, the gates broken, or altogether removed, the field was rank with the ruinous luxuriance of weeds, and the grass-grown avenues spoke of solitude and desertion. The still appearance, too, of the house itself, and the absence of smoke from its time-tinged chimneys—all told a tale which constitutes one, perhaps the *greatest*, portion of Ireland's misery. Even then he did not approach it with the intention of residing there during his sojourn in the country. It was not habitable, nor had it been so for years. The road by which he travelled lay near it, and he could not pass without looking upon the place where a long line of gallant ancestors had succeeded each other, lived their span, and disappeared in their turn.

He contemplated it for some time in a kind of reverie. There it stood, sombre and silent; its gray walls mouldering away—its windows dark and broken;—like a man forsaken by the world, compelled to bear the storms of life without the hand of a friend to support him, though age and decay render him less capable of enduring them. For a moment fancy re-peopled it;—again the stir of life, pastime, mirth, and hospitality echoed within its walls; the train of his long-departed relatives returned; the din of rude and boisterous enjoyment peculiar to the times; the cheerful tumult of the hall at dinner; the family feuds and festivities; the vanities and the passions of those who now sleep in dust;—all—all came before him once more, and played their part in the vision of the moment!

As he walked on, the flitting wing of a bat struck him lightly in its flight; he awoke from the remembrances which crowded on him, and, resuming his journey, soon arrived at the inn of the nearest town, where he stopped that night. The next morning he saw his agent for a short time, but declined entering upon business. For a few days more he visited most of the neighbouring gentry, from whom he received sufficient information to satisfy him, that neither he

himself nor his agent was popular among his tenantry. Many flying reports of the agent's dishonesty and tyranny were mentioned to him, and in every instance he took down the names of the parties, in order to ascertain the truth. M'Evoy's case had occurred more than ten years before, but he found that the remembrance of the poor man's injury was strongly and bitterly retained in the recollections of the people—a circumstance which extorted from the blunt, but somewhat sentimental soldier, a just observation:—"I think," said he, "that there are no people in the world who remember either an injury or a kindness so long as the Irish."

When the tenants were apprised of his presence among them, they experienced no particular feeling upon the subject. During all his former visits to his estate, he appeared merely the creature and puppet of his agent, who never acted the bully, nor tricked himself out in his brief authority more imperiously than he did before him. The knowledge of this damped them, and rendered any expectations of redress or justice from the landlord a matter not to be thought of.

"If he wasn't so great a man," they observed, "who thinks it below him to speak to his tenants, or hear their complaints, there 'ud be some hope. But that rip of hell, Yallow Sam, can wind him round his finger like a thread, an' does, too. There's no use in thiukin' to petition him, or to lodge a complaint against Stony Heart, for the first thing he'd do 'ud be to put it into the yallow-boy's hands, an' thin, God be marci-ful to thim that 'ud complain. No, no; the best way is to wait till Sam's mather* takes him; an' who knows but that 'ud be sooner nor we think."

"They say," another would reply, "that the Colonel is a good gintleman for all that, an' that if he could *once* know the truth, he'd pitch the 'yallow boy' to the 'ould boy.'"

No sooner was it known by his tenantry that the head landlord was disposed to redress their grievances,

* The Devil.

and hear their complaints, than the smothered attachment, which long neglect had nearly extinguished, now burst forth with uncommon power.

"Augh ! by this an' by that, the thrue blood's in him still. The rale gintleman to dale wid, for ever ! We knew he only wanted to come at the thruth, an' thin he'd back us agin the villain that harrished us ! To the divil wid skamin' upstarts, that hasn't the ould blood in thim ! What are they but sconces an' chates, every one o' thim, barrin' an odd one, for a wondher !"

The Colonel's estate now presented a scene of gladness and bustle. Every person who felt in the slightest degree aggrieved, got his petition drawn up ; and, but that we fear our sketch is already too long, we could gratify the reader's curiosity by submitting a few of them. It is sufficient to say, that they came to him in every shape—in all the variety of diction that the poor English language admits of—in the school-master's best copy-hand, and choicest sesquipedalianism of pedantry—in the severer, but more Scriptural terms of the parish clerk—in the engrossing hand and legal phrase of the attorney—in the military form, evidently redolent of the shrewd old pensioner—and in the classical style of the young priest ;—for each and all of the foregoing were enlisted in the cause of those who had petitions to send in "to the Colonel himself, God bless him !"

Early in the morning of the day on which the Colonel had resolved to compare the complaints of his tenantry with the character which his agent gave him of the complainants, he sent for the former, and the following dialogue took place between them.

"Good morning, Mr. Carson ! Excuse me for requesting your presence to-day earlier than usual. I have taken it into my head to know something of my own tenantry, and as they have pestered me with petitions and letters and complaints, I am anxious to have your opinion, as you know them better than I do."

"Before we enter on business, Colonel, allow me to

inquire if you feel relieved of that bilious attack you complained of the day before yesterday? I'm of a bilious habit myself, and know something about the management of digestion!"

"A good digestion is an excellent thing, Carson; as for me, I drank too much claret with my friend B——y; and there's the secret. I don't like cold wines, they never agree with me."

"Nor do I; they are not constitutional. Your father was celebrated for his wines Colonel: I remember an anecdote told me by Captain Ferguson—by the by, do you know where Ferguson could be found now, Sir?"

"Not I. What wines do you drink, Carson?"

"A couple of glasses of sherry, Sir, at dinner; and about ten o'clock a glass of brandy and water."

"Carson, you are sober and *prudent*. Well, about these cursed petitions; you must help me to dispose of them. Why, a man would think by the tenor of them, that these tenants of mine are ground to dust by a tyrant."

"Ah! Colonel, you know little about these fellows. They would make black white. Go and take a ride, Sir, return about four o'clock, and I will have everything as it ought to be."

"I wish to heaven, Carson, I had your talents for business. Do you think my tenants attached to me?"

"Attached! Sir, they are ready to cut your throat or mine, on the first convenient opportunity. You could not conceive their knavishness and dishonesty, except you happened to be an agent for a few years."

"So I have been told, and I am resolved to remove every dishonest tenant from my estate. Is there not a man, for instance, called Brady? He has sent me a long-winded petition here. What do you think of him?"

"Show me the petition, Colonel."

"I cannot lay my hand on it just now; but you shall see it. In the meantime, what's your opinion of the fellow?"

"Brady! Why I know the man particularly well. He is one of my favourites. What the deuce could the fellow petition about, though? I promised the other day to renew his lease for him."

"Oh, then, if he be a favourite of yours, his petition may go to the devil, I suppose? Is the man honest?"

"Remarkably so; and has paid his rents very punctually. He is one of our safest tenants."

"Do you know a man called Cullen?"

"The most litigious scoundrel on the estate."

"Indeed! Oh, then, we must look into the merits of *his* petition, as he is *not* honest. Had he been honest like Brady, Carson, I should have dismissed it."

"Cullen, Sir, is a dangerous fellow. Do you know; that rascal has charged me with keeping back his receipts, and with making him pay double rent!—ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, it's fact."

"The scoundrel! We shall sift him to some purpose, however."

"If you take my advice, Sir, you will send him about his business; for if it be once known that you listen to malicious petitions, my authority over such villains as Cullen is lost."

"Well, I set him aside for the present. Here's a long list of others, all of whom have been oppressed, forsooth. Is there a man called M'Evoy on my estate?—Dominick M'Evoy, I think."

"M'Evoy! Why that rascal, Sir, has not been your tenant for ten years! *His* petition, Colonel, is a key to the nature of their grievances in general."

"I believe you, Carson—most implicitly do I *believe* that. Well, about that rascal?"

"Why, it is so long since, that, upon my honour, I cannot exactly remember the circumstances of his misconduct. He ran away."

"Who is in his farm now, Carson?"

"A very decent man, Sir. One Jackson, an exceedingly worthy, honest, industrious fellow. I take some credit to myself for bringing Jackson on your estate."

"Is Jackson married? Has he a family?"

"Married ! Let me see ! Why—yes—I believe so. Oh, by the by, now I think of it, he is married to a very respectable woman, too. Certain I remember—she usually accompanies him when he pays his rents."

"Then your system must be a good one, Colonel, if you weed out the idle and profligate, to replace them by the honest and industrious ?"

"Precisely so, Sir ; that is my system."

"Yet there are agents who invert your system in some cases ; who drive out the honest and industrious and encourage the idle and profligate ; who cheat at them, Carson, and fill the estates they manage with their own dependents, or relatives, as the case may be. You have been always opposed to this, and I'm glad to hear it."

"No man, Colonel B——, filling the situation which I have the honour to hold under you, could serve your interest with greater zeal and assiduity. I know, I have had so many quarrels, and feuds and wranglings, with these fellows, in order to squeeze money out of them to meet your difficulties, upon my honour, I think if it required five hundred oaths to hang me, they could be procured upon my estate. An agent, Colonel, who is faithful to his landlord, is seldom popular with the tenants."

"I can't exactly see that, Carson ; and I have known an unpopular landlord rendered highly popular by the judicious management of an enlightened and honest agent, who took no bribes, Carson, and who never extorted from nor ground the tenantry under him, something like a counterpart of yourself. But you may be right in general."

"Is there anything particular, Colonel, in which you can assist me now ?"

"Not now. I was anxious to hear the character of those fellows from you who know them. Come at about eleven or twelve o'clock ; these petitioners will be assembled, and you may be able to assist me."

"Colonel, remember I forewarn you, that you

unging into a mesh of difficulties which you will ver be able to disentangle. Leave the fellows to e, Sir ; I know how to deal with them. Besides, on my honour, you are not equal to it, in point of alth. You look ill. Pray, allow me to take home eir papers, and I shall have all clear and satisfactory fore two o'clock. They know my method, Sir."

"They do, Carson, they *do* ; but I am anxious they ould also know *mine*. Besides, it will amuse me, r I want excitement. Good day, for the present ; u will be down about twelve, or one at the farthest."

"Certainly, Sir. Good morning, Colonel."

The agent was too shrewd a man not to perceive at there were touches of cutting irony in some of e Colonel's expressions which he did not like. ere was a dryness, too, in the tone of his voice and rds, blended with a copiousness of good humour, ich, taken altogether, caused him to feel uncomfortable. He could have wished the Colonel at the vil ; yet had the said Colonel never been more niliar in his life, nor, with one or two exceptions, dier to agree with almost every observation made him.

"Well," thought he, "*he* may act as he pleases ; I ve feathered my nest, at all events, and disregard n."

Colonel B——, in fact, ascertained with extreme ret, that something was necessary to be done to ure the good-will of his tenants ; that the conduct his agent had been marked by rapacity and bribery most incredible. He had exacted from the tenantry general the performance of duty-labour to such an tent, that his immense agricultural farms were naged with little expense to himself. If a poor n's corn were drop ripe, or his hay in a precarious te, or his turf undrawn, he must suffer his oats, y, and turf, to be lost, in order to secure the crops the agent. If he had spirit to refuse, he must pect to become a martyr to his resentment. In newing leases his extortions were exorbitant ; ten,

thirty, forty, and fifty guineas he claimed as a fee for his favour, according to the ability of the party; yet this was quite distinct from the renewal fine, and went into his own pocket. When such "glove money" was not to be had, he would accept of a cow or horse, to which he usually made a point to take a fancy; or he wanted to purchase a firkin of butter at that particular time; and the poor people usually made every sacrifice to avoid his vengeance. It is due to Colonel B—— to say, that he acted in the investigation of his agent's conduct with the strictest honour and impartiality. He scrutinised every statement thoroughly, pleaded for him as temperately as he could; found, or pretended to find, extenuating motives for his most indefensible proceedings; but all would not do. The cases were so clear and evident against him, even in the opinion of the neighbouring gentry, who had been for years looking upon the system of selfish misrule which he practised, that, at length, the generous Colonel's blood boiled with indignation in his veins at the contemplation of his villany. He accused himself bitterly for neglecting his duties as a landlord, and felt both remorse and shame for having wasted his time, health, and money, in the fashionable dissipation of London and Paris; whilst a cunning, unprincipled upstart played the vampire with his tenants, and turned his estate into a scene of oppression and poverty. Nor was this all; he had been endeavouring to bring the property more and more into his own clutches, a point which he would ultimately have gained, had not the Colonel's late succession to so large a fortune enabled him to meet his claims.

At one o'clock the tenants were all assembled about the inn door, where the Colonel had resolved to hold his little court. The agent himself soon arrived, as did several other gentlemen, the Colonel's friends, who knew the people, and could speak to their character.

The first man called was Dominick M'Evoy. No

sooner was his name uttered, than a mild, poor-looking man, rather advanced in years, came forward.

"I beg your pardon, Colonel," said Carson, "here is some mistake; this man is not one of your tenants. You may remember I told you so this morning."

"I remember it," replied the Colonel; "this is 'the rascal' you spoke of—is he not? M'Evoy," the Colonel proceeded, "you will reply to my questions with strict truth. You will state nothing but what has occurred between you and my agent; you must not even turn a circumstance in your own favour, nor against Mr. Carson, by either adding to, or taking from it, more or less than the truth. I say this to you, and to all present; for, upon my honour, I shall dismiss the first case in which I discover a falsehood."

"Wid the help o' the Almighty, Sir, I'll state nothing but the bare thruth."

"How long are you off my estate?"

"Ten years, your honour, or a little more."

"How came you to run away out of your farm?"

"Run away, your honour! God, he knows, I didn't run away, Sir. The whole counthry knows that."

"Yes, run away! Mr. Carson, here, stated to me this morning, that you ran away. He is a gentleman of integrity, and would not state a falsehood."

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, not positively. I told you I did not exactly remember the circumstances; I said I thought so; but I may be wrong, for, indeed, my memory of facts is not good. M'Evoy, however, is a very *honest man*, and I have no doubt will state everything as it happened, fairly and without malice."

"An honest '*rascal*,' I suppose you mean, Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, bitterly. "Proceed, M'Evoy."

M'Evoy stated the circumstances precisely as the reader is already acquainted with them; after which the Colonel turned round to his agent and inquired what he had to say in reply.

"You cannot expect, Colonel B——," he replied, "that *with such a multiplicity of business on my*

hands, I could remember, after a lapse of ten years, the precise state of this particular case. Perhaps I may have some papers, a memorandum or so, at home, that may throw light upon it. At present I can only say, that the man failed in his rents, I ejected him, and put a better tenant in his place. I cannot see a crime in that."

"Plase your honour," replied M'Evoy, "I can prove by them that's standin' to the fore this minute, as well as by this written affidavit, Sir, that I offered him the full rint, havin', at the same time, as God is my judge, ped part of it afore."

"That is certainly false—an untrue and malicious statement," said Carson. "I now remember that the cause of my resentment—yes, of my just resentment against you, was your reporting that I received your rent and withheld your receipt."

"Then," observed the Colonel, "there has been *more than one* charge of that nature brought against you? You mentioned *another* to me this morning, if I mistake not."

"I have made my oath, your honour, of the thruth of it; an' here is a dacent man, Sir, a Protestant, that lent me the money, an' was present when I offered it to him. Mr. Smith, come forrid, Sir, an' spake up for the poor man, as you're always willin' to do."

"I object to *his* evidence," said Carson, "he is my open enemy."

"I am your enemy, Mr. Carson, or rather the enemy of your corruption and want of honesty," said Smith: "but, as you say, an *open* one. I scorn to say behind your back what I wouldn't say to your face. Right well you know that I was present when he tendered you his rent. I lent him part of it. But why did you and your bailiffs turn him out, when his wife was on her sick bed? Allowing that he could not pay his rent, was that any reason you should do so barbarous an act as to drag a woman from her sick bed, and

; the point of death? But we know your reason for it."

gentlemen," said the Colonel, "pray what character do M'Evoy and Smith here bear in the country?"

"We have known them both for years to be honest, conscientious men," said those whom he addressed: "this is their character, and in our opinion they well deserve it."

"God bless you, gentlemen!" said M'Evoy—"God bless your honours, for your kind words! I'm sure, on my own part, I hope I'll always deserve your opinion, although but a poor man *now*, God bless me!"

Carson, who occupies the farm at present, Mr. Car-

son the man I mentioned to you this morning, Sir. His name is Jackson."

"And pray, Mr. Carson, who is his wife?"

"Oh, by-the-by, Colonel, that's a little too close! the gentlemen smile; but they know I must begin to decline answering that question—not that it matters much. We have all sown our wild oats in our own—myself as well as another—ha, ha, ha!"

"In fact, under other circumstances," observed the Colonel, "could never draw an inquiry from me; but if it is connected with, or probably has occasioned, any such, unfeeling, and an unjust act of oppression towards an honest man, I therefore alluded to it, as stating the motives from which you acted. She is a legitimate daughter, Sir!"

"There's one o' the baker's dozen o' them, please your honour," observed a humorous little Presbyterian, with a sarcastic face, and sharp northern accent—"for my part, I think he has one on every head. All count, your honour, on my fingers a half-dozen, all on your estate, Sir, featherin' nests as fast as they can."

"Is this Jackson a good tenant, Mr. Carson?"

"I gave you his character this morning, Colonel B."

"Hout, Colonel!" said the Presbyterian, "deil a penny rent the man pays, at aall, at aall. A'll swear A hev it from Jackson's own lips. He made him a Bailey, Sir; he suts rent free. Ask the man, Sir, for his receipts, an' A'll warrant the truth will come out."

"I have secured Jackson's attendance," said the Colonel: "let him be called in."

The man in a few minutes entered.

"Jackson," said the Colonel, "how long is it since you paid Mr. Carson here any rent?"

Jackson looked at Carson for his cue; but the Colonel rose up indignantly: "Fellow!" he proceeded, "if you tamper with me a single moment, you shall find Mr. Carson badly able to protect you. If you speak falsehood, be it at your peril."

"By Jing, Sir," said Jackson, "A'll say nothin' against my father-in-laa, an' A don't care who teks it well or ull. A was jist tekin' a *gun* * with a fren' or two—an' d—— me, A say, A'll stick to my father-in-laa, for he hes stuck to me."

"You appear to be a hardened drunken wretch," observed the Colonel. "Will you be civil enough to show your last receipt for rent?"

"Wull A show it? A dono whether A wull or not, nor A dono whether A hev it or not; but ef aall the receipts in Europe wur burnt, d—— my blood, but A'll stick to my father-in-laa."

"Your father-in-law may be proud of you," said the Colonel.

"By h——, A'll back you en that," said the fellow nodding his head, and looking round him confidently. "By h——, A say that, too!"

"And I am sorry to be compelled to add," continued the Colonel, "that you may be equally proud of your father-in-law."

"A say, right agane! D—— me, bit A'll back that, too!" and he nodded confidently, and looked around

* A half-tumbler of punch.

the room once more. "A wull, d—— my blood, bit o man can say agane it. A 'm married to his aughtner ; an', by the sun that shines, A'll still stan' p for my father-in-laa."

"Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, "can you disprove these facts? Can you show that you did not expel M'Evoy from his farm, and put the husband of your illegitimate daughter into it? That you did not receive his rent, decline giving him a receipt, and afterwards compel him to pay twice, because he could not produce the receipt which you withheld?"

"Gentlemen," said Carson, not directly replying to the Colonel, "there is a base conspiracy got up against me ; and I can perceive moreover, that there is evidently some unaccountable intention on the part of Colonel B. to insult my feelings and injure my character. When paltry circumstances that have occurred above ten years ago, are raked up in my teeth, I have little to say, but that it proves how very badly off the Colonel must have been for an imputation against my conduct and discretion as his agent, since he finds himself compelled to hunt so far back for a charge."

"That is by no means the heaviest charge I have to bring against you," replied the Colonel. "There is no lack of them ; nor shall you be able to complain that they are not *recent*, as well as of longer standing. Your conduct in the case of poor honest M'Evoy here, is black and iniquitous. He must be restored to his farm, but by other hands than yours, and that ruffian instantly expelled from it. From this moment, Sir, you cease to be my agent. You have betrayed the confidence I reposed in you ; you have misled me as to the character of my tenants ; you have been a deceitful, cringing, cunning, selfish, and rapacious tyrant. My people you have ground to dust ; my property you have lessened in value nearly one-half, and for your motives in doing this, I refer you to certain transactions and legal documents which passed between us. There is nothing cruel or mercenary which you did *not practise*, in order to enrich yourself. The

whole tenor of your conduct is before me. Your profligacy is not only discovered, but already proved; and you played those villanous pranks, I suppose because I have been mostly an absentee. Do not think, however, that you shall enjoy the fruits of your extortion. I will place the circumstances, and the proofs of the respective charges against you in the hands of my solicitor, and, by the sacred heaven above me! you shall disgorge the fruits of your rapacity. My good people, I shall remain among you for another fortnight, during which time I intend to go through my estate, and set everything to rights as well as I can, until I may appoint a humane and feeling *gentleman* as my agent—such a one as will have, at least, a *character* to lose. I also take this opportunity of informing you, that in future I shall visit you often, will redress your grievances, should you have any to complain of, and will give such assistance to the honest and industrious among you—but to *them only*—as I trust may make us better pleased with each other than we have been.—Do not you go, M'Evoy, until I speak to you."

During these observations Carson sat with a smile, or rather a sneer upon his lips. It was the sneer of a purse-proud villain, confident that his wealth, no matter how ill-gotten, was still wealth, and worth its value.

"Colonel," said he, "I have heard all you said, but you see me 'so strong in honesty,' that I am not moved. In the course of a few weeks I shall have purchased an estate of my own, *which I will manage differently*, for my fortune is made, Sir. I intend also to give up my other agencies: I am rather old, and must retire to enjoy a little of the *otium cum dignitate*. I wish you all good morning."

The Colonel turned away in abhorrence, but disdained any reply.

"A say, Sam," said the Presbyterian, "bring your son-in-laa wuth you."

"An' A say that, too," exclaimed the drunken ruf-

fian—"an' A say stull, that d—— my blood, bit A'll stick to my father-in-laa! That's the point!"—and again he nodded his head, and looked round him with a drunken swagger:—"A'll stick to my father-in-laa! A'll do that; feth A wull!"*

It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader that the Colonel's address to Carson soon got among the assembled tenantry, and a vehement volley of groans and hisses followed the discarded agent up the street.

"Ha! bad luck to you for an ould villain! You were made to hear on the deaf side o' your head at last! You may take the black wool out o' your ears now, you rip! The cries an' curses o' the widows an' orphans that you made and oppressed, has ris up agin you at the long run! Ha! you beggarly nager! maybe you'll make us neglect our own work to do yours agin!" "Long life to noble Colonel B——, the poor man's friend!—long life to him for ever an' a day longer! Whoo! my darlins! Huzza!"

The warm interest which the Colonel took in M'Evoy's behalf was looked upon by the other tenants as a guarantee of his sincerity in all he promised. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds. They got out his carriage from the inn-yard, and drew it through the town, though the Colonel himself, beyond the fact of their shouting, remained quite ignorant of what was going forward.

After Carson's departure, the Colonel's friends, having been first asked to dine with him at the inn, also took their leave, and none remained but M'Evoy, who waited with pleasing anxiety to hear what the Colonel proposed to say—for he felt certain that it would be agreeable.

"M'Evoy," said the Colonel, "I am truly sorry for what you have suffered through the villany of my agent; but I will give you redress, and allow you for

* This dialect is local.

what you have lost by the transaction. It is I have been lately told by a person who pleads cause nobly and eloquently, that I can never you for what you have suffered. However, we can, we will do. You are poor, I understand?"

"God he sees that, Sir ; and afflicted too, please honour."

"Afflicted? How is that?"

"I had a son, Sir—a blessed boy! a darlin' boy, once our comfort, an' once we thought he'd be pride an' our staff, but"—

The poor man's tears here flowed fast ; he took the skirt of his "Cotha More," or great coat, and, wiping his eyes, and clearing his voice, proceeded :-

"He was always, as I said, a blessed boy, and looked up to him always, Sir. He saw our poverty your honour, an' he felt it, Sir, keen enough, indeed God help him ! How-an'-iver, he took it on him to go up to Munster, Sir, undher hopes of risin' us—undher the hopes, poor child—an' God knows, Sir—if—oh, Jemmy, avourneen machree !—I doubt—I doubt you sunk undher what proved too many for you !—I doubt my child's dead, Sir,—him that all our hearts wor fixed upon ; and if that 'ud happen to be the case, nothin'—not even your kindness in doin' us justice, could make us happy. We would rather beg wid him, Sir, nor have the best in the world widout him. His poor young heart, Sir, was fixed upon the place your honour is restorin' us to ; an' I'm afeard, his mother, Sir, would break her heart if she thought he couldn't share our good fortune ! And we don't know whether he's livin' or dead ! That, Sir, is what's afflictin' us. I had some notion of goin' to look for him ; but he tould us he would never write or let us hear from him, till he'd be one thing or ther."

"I can tell you, for your satisfaction, that your son well, M'Evoy. Believe me, he is well—I know it."

"Well ! before God, does your honour spake truth ?
 // ! Oh, Sir, for His sake that died for us, an' for

the sake of his blessed mother, can you tell me is my darlin' son alive?"

"He is living; is in excellent health; is as well dressed as I am; and has friends as rich and as capable of assisting him as myself. But how is this? What's the matter with you? You are pale! Good God! Here, Waiter! Waiter! Waiter, I say!"

The Colonel rang the bell violently, and two or three waiters entered at the same moment.

"Bring a little wine and water, one of you, and let the other two remove this man to the open window. Be quick. What do you stare at?"

In a few minutes the old man recovered, and untying the narrow coarse cravat which he wore, wiped the perspiration off his pale face.

"Pray, don't be too much affected," said the Colonel. "Waiter, bring up refreshment—bring wine—be quiet and calm—you are weak, poor fellow—but we will strengthen you by-and-by."

"I am wake, Sir," he replied; "for, God help us! this was a hard year upon us; and we suffered what few could bear. But he's livin', Colonel. Our darlin' is livin'! Oh, Colonel, your kindness went to my heart this day afore, but that was nothin'—he's livin' an' well? On my two knees, before God, I thank you for them words! I thank you a thousand an' a thousand times more for them words, nor for what your honour did about Yallow Sam."

"Get up," said the Colonel—"get up. The proceedings of the day have produced a revulsion of feeling which has rendered you incapable of sustaining intelligence of your son. He is well, I assure you. Bring those things to this table, waiter."

"But can your honour tell me anything in particular about him, Sir? What he is doin'—or what he intends to do?"

"Yes! he is at a respectable boarding-school."

"Boordin'-school! But isn't boordin'-schools Protestants, Sir?"

"*Not at all; he is at a Catholic boarding-school.*

and reading hard to be a priest, which, I hope, he will soon be. He has good friends, and you may thank *him* for being restored to your farm."

"Glory be to my Maker for that! Oh, Sir, your tenants wor desaved in you! They thought, Sir, that you wor a heard-hearted gintleman, that didn't care whether they lived or died."

"I feel that I have neglected them too long, M'Evoy. Now take some refreshment: eat something, and afterwards drink a few glasses of wine. Your feelings have been much excited, and you will be the better for it. Keep up your spirits. I am going to ride, and must leave you: but if you call on me to-morrow, at one o'clock, I shall have more good news for you. We must stock your farm, and enable you to enter upon it creditably."

"Sir," said M'Evoy, "you are a Protestant; but, as I hope to enther glory, I an' my wife an' childhre will pray that your bed may be made in heaven, this night; and that your honour may be led to see the thruth an' the right coorse."

The Colonel then left him; and the simple man, on looking at the cold meat, bread, and wine before him, raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, to thank God for his goodness, and to invoke a blessing upon his noble and munificent benefactor.

But how shall we describe the feelings of his family, when, after returning home, he related the occurrences of that day. The severe and pressing exigencies under which they laboured had prevented his sons from attending the investigation that was to take place in town. Their expectations, however, were raised, and they looked out with intense anxiety for the return of their father.

At length, he was seen coming slowly up the hill; the spades were thrown aside, and the whole family assembled to hear "what was done."

The father entered in silence, sat down, and after wiping his brow, and laying down his hat, placing *his staff* across it upon the floor, he drew his breath

"Dominick," said the wife, "what news? What was me?"

"Vara," replied Dominick, "do you remember the day—fair and handsome you were then—when I first kissed your lips, as my own darlin' wife?"

"Ah, avourneen, Dominick, don't spake of them times. The happiness we had then is long gone, rushla, in one sense."

"It's before me like yestherday, Vara,—the delight that went through my heart, just as clear as yestherday, or the blessed sun that's shinin' through the broken windy on the floor there. I remember, Vara, lying to you that day—I don't know whether *you* remember it or not—but *I* remember sayin' to you, that if I lived a thousand years, I could never feel such happiness as I did when first I pressed you to my heart as my own wife."

"Well, but we want to hear what happened, Dominick, achora."

"Do you remember the words, Vara?"

"Och! I do, avourneen. *Didn't they go into my heart at the time, an' how could I forget them?* But I can't bear, somehow, to look back at what we were then, bekase I feel my heart brakin', acushla!"

"Well, Vara, look at me. Amn't I a poor wasted creature now, in comparishment to what I was thin?"

"God he sees the change that's in you, darlin'! But were 'twasn't your fault, or mine either, Dominick, villish!"

"Well, Vara, you see me now—I'm happier—before God, I'm happier—happier a thousand degrees, than I was thin! Come to my arms, ashore machree—my heart's breakin'—but it's wid happiness—don't be frightened—it's wid joy I'm sheddin' these tears—it's wid happiness an' delight I'm cryin'! Jemmy is livin', n' well, childhre—he's livin' an' well, Vara—the star of our hearts is livin', an' well, an' happy! Kneel down, childhre—kneel down! Bend before the great God, an' thank him for his kindness to your blessed mother—to our blessed son. Bless the Colonel

childhre; he
all, as he
myself, or the

He paused
his hands
then resumed
affected.

"Now, don't
don't any of y
Bear it mild
take a start o
own ould face
heaven, bless
stock it for
Yallow Sam is

"Out!" they
Sam out! Oh

"Now belie
again! But a

"Who?—wh
him out?"

"Our son,
him out, an' g
it partly from
remainder from
home. But the
friends aquil
at a Catholic
childhre, an', in
ordhers."

We here draw
Questions upon
and cross-examin
until all was
communicate.

Another simple
man, I write
family had some
his hand in his
slices of mutton.

Along wid all, childhre," said he, "the Colonel hered me my dinner. I ate plinty myself, an' ped these slices in my pocket for you : but the il a one o' me knows what kind o' mate it is. An' ot wine, too! Oh!—Well, they may talk, but wine he dhrink! Bring me the ould knife, till I make air divide of it among ye. Musha, what kind o' te can it be, for myself doesn't remimber atin' any t, barrin' bacon, an' a bit o' slink-veal of an odd e?"

They all ate it with an experimental air of sagacity t was rather amusing. None, however, had ever ted mutton before, and, consequently, the name of meat remained, on that occasion, a profound ret to M'Evoy and his family.* It is true, they posed it to be mutton; but not one of them could ounce it to be such, from any positive knowledge its peculiar flavour.

"Well," said Dominick, "it's no matther what the ne of it is, in regard that it's good mate, anyway, them that has enough of it."

With a fervent heart and streaming eyes did this tuous family offer up their grateful prayers to that d whose laws they had not knowingly violated, and whose providence they owed so much. Nor was ir benefactor forgotten. The strength and energy the Irish language, being that in which the santry usually pray, were well adapted to express depth of their gratitude towards a man who had, they said, "humbled himself to look into their nts, as if he was like one of themselves!"

For upwards of ten years they had not gone to bed e from the heaviness of care, or the wasting grasp poverty. Now their hearth was once more surrounded by peace and contentment; their burthens re removed, their pulses beat freely, and the guage of happiness again was heard under their

There are hundreds of thousands—yes, millions—of the poorest
ees in Ireland, who have never tasted mutton!

humble roof. Even sleep could not repress the vivacity of their enjoyments : they dreamt of their brother—for in the Irish heart the domestic affections hold the first place ;—they dreamt of the farm to which those affections had so long yearned. They trod it again as its legitimate possessors. Its fields were brighter, its corn waved with softer murmurs to the breeze, its harvests were richer, and the song of their harvest home more cheerful than before. Their delight was tumultuous, but intense ; and when they arose in the morning to

A sober certainty of waking bliss,

they again knelt in worship to God with exulting hearts, and again offered up their sincere prayers in behalf of the just man who had asserted their rights against the oppressor.

Colonel B. was a man who, without having been aware of it, possessed an excellent capacity for business. The neglect of his property resulted not from want of feeling, but merely from want of consideration. There had moreover been no precedent for him to follow. He had seen no Irishman of rank ever bestow a moment's attention on his tenantry. They had been, for the most part, absentees like himself, and felt satisfied if they succeeded in receiving their half-yearly remittance in due course, without ever reflecting for a moment upon the situation of those from whom it was drawn.

Nay, what was more—he had not seen even the *resident* gentry enter into the state and circumstances of those who lived upon their property. It was a mere accident that determined him to become acquainted with his tenants ; but no sooner had he seen his duty, and come to the resolution of performing it, than the decision of his character became apparent. It is true, that, within the last few years, the Irish landlords have advanced in knowledge. Many of them have introduced more improved systems of agriculture, and *instructed* their tenants in the best methods of apply-

ing them ; but, during the time of which we write, an Irish landlord only saw his tenants when canvassing them for their votes, and instructing them in dishonesty and perjury, not reflecting that he was then teaching them to practise the arts of dissimulation and fraud against himself. This was the late system : let us hope that it will be superseded by a better one ; and that a landlord will think it a duty, but neither a trouble nor a condescension, to look into his own affairs, and keep an eye upon the morals and habits of his tenantry.

The Colonel, as he had said, remained more than a fortnight upon his estate ; and, as he often declared since, the recollections arising from the good which he performed during that brief period, rendered it the portion of his past life upon which he could look with most satisfaction. He did not leave the country till he saw M'Evoy and his family restored to their farm, and once more independent ;—until he had redressed every well-founded complaint, secured the affections of those who had before detested him, and diffused peace and comfort amongst every family upon his estate. From thenceforth he watched the interest for his tenants, and soon found that in promoting their welfare, and instructing them in their duties, he was more his own benefactor than theirs. Before many years had elapsed, his property was wonderfully improved ; he himself was called the “ Lucky Landlord,” “ bekase,” said the people, “ ever since he spoke to, an’ advised his tenants, we find that it’s *lucky* to live undher him. The people has heart to work wid a gintleman that won’t grind thim ; an’ so sign’s on it, every one thrives upon his land ; an’ dang my bones, but I believe a rotten stick ’ud grow on it, set in case it was thried.”

In sooth, his popularity became proverbial ; but it is probable, that not even his justice and humanity contributed so much to this, as the vigour with which he prosecuted his suit against “ Yallow Sam,” whom he *compelled literally* to “ disgorge” the fruits of his

heartless extortion. This worthy agent died soon after his disgrace, without any legitimate issue; and his property, which amounted to about fifty thousand pounds, is now inherited by a gentleman of the strictest honour and integrity. To this day his memory is detested by the people, who, with that bitterness by which they stigmatise a villain, have erected him into a standard of dishonesty. If a man become remarkable for want of principle, they usually say—"he's as great a rogue as Yallow Sam;" or, "he is the greatest sconce that ever was in the country, *barrin' Yallow Sam.*"

We now dismiss him, and request our readers, at the same time, not to suppose that we have held him up as a portrait of Irish agents in general. On the contrary, we believe that they constitute a most respectable class of men, who have certainly very difficult duties to perform. The Irish landlords, we are happy to say, taught by experience, have, for the most part, both seen and felt the necessity of appointing gentlemen of property to situations so very important, and which require so much patience, consideration, and humanity, in those who fill them. We trust they will persevere in this plan;* but we can assure them, that all the virtues of the best agent can never compensate, in the opinion of the people, for neglect in the "Head Landlord." One visit or act, even of nominal kindness, from *him*, will at any time produce more attachment and gratitude among them, than a whole life spent in good offices by an agent. Like Sterne's French Beggar, they would prefer a pinch of snuff from the one, to a guinea from the other. The agent only renders them a favour, but the Head Landlord does them an honour.

Colonel B., immediately after his return home, sent for Mr. O'Brien, who waited on him with a greater degree of curiosity, than perhaps he had ever

* This tale has been written nearly twelve years, but the author deeply regrets that the Irish landlords have disenthralled themselves to the favourable notice taken of them in the text.

felt before. The Colonel smiled as he extended his hand to him.

"Mr. O'Brien," said he, "I knew you would feel anxious to hear the result of my visit to the estate which this man with the nickname managed for me."

"Managed, Sir! Did you say managed?"

"I spoke in the past time, O'Brien: he is out."

"Then your *protégé's* story was correct, Sir?"

"True to a tittle. O'Brien, there is something extraordinary in that boy; otherwise how could it happen that a sickly, miserable-looking creature, absolutely in tatters, could have impressed us both so strongly with a sense of the injustice done ten years ago to his father? It is, indeed, remarkable."

"The boy, Colonel, deeply felt that act of injustice, and the expression of it came home to the heart."

"I have restored his father, however. The poor man and his family are once more happy. I have stocked their old farm for them; in fact, they now enjoy comfort and independence."

"I am glad, Sir, that you have done them justice. That act, alone, will go far to redeem your character from the odium which the conduct of your agent was calculated to throw upon it."

"There is not probably in Ireland a landlord so popular as I am this moment—at least among my tenants on *that* property. Restoring M'Evoy, however, is but a small part of what I have done. Carson's pranks were incredible. He was a rack-renter of the first water. A person named Brady had paid him twenty-five guineas as a *donceur* in other words, as a bribe—for renewing a lease for him; yet, after having received the money, he kept the poor man dangling after him, and at length told him that he was offered a larger sum by another. In some cases he kept back the receipts, and made the poor people pay twice, which was still more iniquitous. Then, Sir, he would not take bank notes in payment. No; he was so wonderfully conscien-

tious, and so zealously punctual, in fulfilling *my wishes*, as he told them on the subject, that nothing would pass in payment but gold. This gold, Sir, they were compelled to receive from himself, at a most oppressive premium ; so that he actually fleeced them under my name, in every conceivable form of villany. He is a usurer, too ; and, I am told, worth forty or fifty thousand pounds ; but, thank heaven ! he is no longer an agent of mine."

" It gives me sincere pleasure, Sir, that you have at length got correct habits of thinking upon your duties as an Irish landlord ; for, believe me, Colonel B., as a subject involving a great portion of national happiness or national misery, it is entitled to the deepest and most serious consideration, not only of the class to which you belong, but of the legislature. Something should be done, Sir, to improve the condition of the poorer classes. A rich country and poor inhabitants is an anomaly ; and whatever is done should be prompt and effectual. If the Irish landlords looked directly into the state of their tenantry, and set themselves vigorously to the task of bettering their circumstances, they would, I am certain, establish the tranquillity and happiness of the country at large. The great secret, Colonel, of the dissensions that prevail amongst us is the poverty of the people. They are poor, and therefore the more easily wrought up to outrage ; they are poor, and think that *any* change must be for the better ; they are not only poor, but imaginative, and the fittest recipients for those vague speculations by which they are deluded. Let their condition be improved, and the most fertile source of popular tumult and crime is closed. Let them be taught *how* to labour : let them not be bowed to the earth by rents far above the real value of their lands. The pernicious maxims which float among them must be refuted—not by theory, but by practical lessons performed before their eyes *for their own advantage*. Let them be taught *how to discriminate* between their real interests and their

prejudices ; and none can teach them all this so effectually as their landlords, if they could be roused from their apathy, and induced to undertake the task. Who ever saw a poor nation without great crimes ?”

“ Very true, O'Brien ; quite true. I am resolved to inspect personally the condition of those who reside on my other estates. But now about our *protégé* ? How is he doing ?”

“ Extremely well. I have had a letter from him a few days ago, in which he alludes to the interest you have taken in himself and his family, with a depth of feeling truly affecting.”

“ When you write to him, let him know that I have placed his father in his old farm ; and that Carson is out. Say I am sure he will conduct himself properly, in which case I charge myself with his expenses until he shall have accomplished his purpose. After that he may work his own way through life, and I have no doubt but he will do it well and honourably.”

Colonel B——’s pledge on this occasion was nobly redeemed. Our humble hero pursued his studies with zeal and success. In due time he entered Maynooth, where he distinguished himself not simply for smartness as a student, but as a young man possessed of a mind far above the common order. During all this time nothing occurred worthy of particular remark, except that, in fulfilment of his former vow, he never wrote to any of his friends ; for the reader should have been told, that this was originally comprehended in the determination he had formed. He received ordination at the hands of his friend the Bishop, whom we have already introduced to the reader, and on the same day he was appointed by that gentleman to a curacy in his own parish. The Colonel, whose regard for him never cooled, presented him with fifty pounds, together with a horse, saddle, and bridle ; so that he found himself in a capacity to enter upon his duties in a decent and becoming manner. Another circumstance that added considerably to his satisfaction,

✓
 // was the appointment of Mr. O'Brien to a pa-
 joining that of the Bishop. {James's affliction
 been the means of bringing the merits of that
 lent man before his spiritual superior} who is
 much attached to him, and availed himself
 earliest opportunity of rewarding his unob-
 tained piety and benevolence.

No sooner was his ordination completed, than
 long suppressed yearnings after his home and kin
 came upon his spirit with a power that could not
 be restrained. He took leave of his friends with a
 light heart, and set out on a delightful summer
 journey to revisit all that had been, notwithstanding
 long absence and severe trials, so strongly wrought
 into his memory and affections. Our readers may
 therefore, suppose him on his journey home, and per-
 mit themselves to be led in imagination to the house
 of his former friend, Lanigan, where we must lay the
 scene for the present.

Lanigan's residence has the same comfortable and
 warm appearance which always distinguishes the
 habitation of the independent and virtuous man.
 What, however, can the stir, and bustle, and agitation
 which prevail in it mean? The daughters run out to
 a little mound, or natural terrace, beside the house,
 and look anxiously towards the road; then return, and
 almost immediately appear again, with the same in-
 tense anxiety to catch a glimpse of some one whom
 they expect. They look keenly; but why is it that
 their disappointment appears to be attended with such
 dismay? They go into their father's house once more,
 wringing their hands, and betraying all the symptoms
 of affliction. Here is their mother, too, coming to
 peer into the distance, she is rocking with that motion
 peculiar to Irishwomen when suffering distress. She
 places her open hand upon her brows that she may
 collect her sight to a particular spot; she is blinded
 by her tears; breaks out into a low wail, and returns
 with something like the darkness of despair on her
 countenance. She goes into the house, passes through

the kitchen, and enters into a bed-room ; seats herself on a chair beside the bed, and renews her low but bitter wail of sorrow. Her husband is lying in that state which the peasantry know usually precedes the agonies of death.

"For the sake of the livin' God," said he, on seeing her, "is there any sign o' them?"

"Not yet, *a suillish* ; * but they will soon—they must soon, asthore, be here, an' thin your mind will be asy."

"Oh, Alley, Alley, if you could know what I suffer for 'fraid I'd die without the priest, you'd pity me!"

"I do pity you, asthore : but don't be cast down, for I have my trust in God that he won't desert you in your last hour. You did what you could, my heart's pride ; you bent before him night an' mornin', and sure the poor neighbour never wint from your door without lavin' his blessin' behind him."

The dying man raised his hands feebly from the bed-clothes ; "Ah !" he exclaimed, "I thought I did a great dale, Alley : but now—but now—it appears nothin' to what I ought to a' done when I could. Still, avourneen, my life's not unpleasant when I look back at it ; for I can't remimber that I ever purposely offinded a livin' mortal. All I want to satisfy me is the priest."

"No, avourneen, you did not ; for it wasn't in you to offend a child."

"Alley, you'll pardon me an' forgive me, acushla, if ever—if ever I did what was displasin' to you ! An' call in the childhre, till I see them about me—I want to have their forgiveness, too. I know I'll have it—for they wor good childhre, an' ever loved me."

The daughters now entered the room, exclaiming—"*Ahir dheelish*, (beloved father,) Pether is comin' by himself, but no priest ! Blessed Queen of Heaven, what will we do ? Oh ! father, darlin', are you to die without the Holy Ointment?"

* My light.

The sick man clasped his hands, looked towards heaven, and groaned aloud.

"Oh, it's hard, this," said he. "It's hard upon me! Yet I won't be cast down. I'll trust in my good God; I'll trust in his blessed name!"

His wife, on hearing that her son was returned without the priest, sat, with her face shrouded by her apron, weeping in grief that none but they who know the dependence which those belonging to her church place in its last rites can comprehend. The children appeared almost distracted; their grief had more of that stunning character which attends unexpected calamity, than of sorrow for one who is gradually drawn from life.

At length the messenger entered the room, and almost choked with tears, stated that both priests were absent that day at Conference, and would not return till late.

The hitherto moderated grief of the wife arose to a pitch much wilder than the death of her husband could, under ordinary circumstances, occasion. To die without absolution—to pass away into eternity "un-anointed, unanealed"—without being purified from the inherent stains of humanity—was to her a much deeper affliction than her final separation from him. She cried in tones of the most piercing despair, and clapped her hands, as they do who weep over the dead. Had he died in the calm confidence of having received the *Viaticum*, or Sacrament, before death, his decease would have nothing remarkably calamitous in it, beyond usual occurrences of a similar nature. Now the grief was intensely bitter in consequence of his expected departure without the priest. His sons and daughters felt it as forcibly as his wife; their lamentations were full of the strongest and sharpest agony.

For nearly three hours did they remain in this situation; poor Lanigan sinking by degrees into that collapsed state from which there is no possibility of rallying. He was merely able to speak, and recognise

his family ; but every moment advanced him, with awful certainty, nearer and nearer to his end.

A great number of the neighbours were now assembled, all participating in the awful feeling which predominated, and anxious to compensate by their prayers for the absence of that confidence derived by Roman Catholics during the approach of death, from the spiritual aid of the priest. They were all at prayer ; the sick room and kitchen were crowded with his friends and acquaintances, many of whom knelt out before the door, and joined with loud voices in the Rosary which was offered up in his behalf.

In this crisis were they, when a horseman, dressed in black, approached the house. Every head was instantly turned round, with a hope that it might be the parish priest or his curate ; but, alas ! they were doomed to experience a fresh disappointment. The stranger, though clerical enough in his appearance, presented a countenance with which none of them was acquainted. On glancing at the group who knelt around the door, he appeared to understand the melancholy cause which brought them together.

"How is this?" he exclaimed. "Is there any one here sick or dying?"

"Poor Misther Lanigan, Sir, is jist departin', glory be to God ! An' what is terrible all out upon himself and family, he's dyin' widout the priest. They're both at Conwhirence, Sir, and can't come—Mr. Dogherty an' his curate."

"Make way !" said the stranger, throwing himself off his horse, and passing quickly through the people. "Show me to the sick man's room—be quick, my friends—I am a Catholic clergyman."

In a moment a passage was cleared, and the stranger found himself beside the bed of death. Grief in the room was loud and bitter ; but his presence stilled it despite of what they felt.

"My dear friends," said he, "you know there should be silence in the apartment of a dying man. For shame !—for shame ! Cease this clamour, it will but

distract him for whom you weep, and 'prevent him from composing his mind for the great trial that is before him."

"Sir," said Lanigan's wife, seizing his hand in both hers, and looking distractedly in his face, "are you a priest? For heaven's sake tell us!"

"I am," he replied; "leave the room every one of you. I hope your husband is not speechless?"

"Sweet Queen of heaven, not yet, may her name be praised! but near it your Reverence—widin little or no time of it."

Whilst they spoke, he was engaged in putting the stole about his neck, after which he cleared the room, and commenced hearing Lanigan's confession.

The appearance of a priest, and the consolation it produced, rallied the powers of life in the benevolent farmer. He became more collected; made a clear and satisfactory confession; received the sacrament of Extreme Unction; and felt himself able to speak with tolerable distinctness and precision. The effects of all this were astonishing. A placid serenity, full of hope and confidence, beamed from the pale and worn features of him who was but a few minutes before in a state of terror altogether indescribable. When his wife and family, after having been called in, observed this change, they immediately participated in his tranquillity. Death had been deprived of its sting, and grief of its bitterness! their sorrow was still deep, but it was not darkened by the dread of future misery. They felt for him as a beloved father, a kind husband, and a dear friend, who had lived a virtuous life, feared God, and was now about to pass into happiness.

When the rites of the church were administered, and the family again assembled round the bed, the priest sat down in a position which enabled him to see the features of the good man more distinctly.

"I would be glad," said Lanigan, "to know who it is that God in his goodness has sent to smooth my bed in death, if it 'ud be plasin', Sir, to you to tell me?"

"Do you remember," replied the priest, "a young d whom you met some years ago on his way to lunster, as a poor scholar? You and your family ere particularly kind to him ; so kind that he has ever since forgotten your affectionate hospitality."

"We do, your Reverence, we do. A mild, gentle rathur he was, poor boy. I hope God prospered him."

"You see him now before you," said the priest. I am that boy, and I thank God that I can testify, owever slightly, my deep sense of the virtues which ou exercised towards me ; although I regret that the ccasion is one of such affliction."

The farmer raised his eyes and feeble hands towards eaven. "Praise an' glory to your name, good God !" e exclaimed. "Praise an' glory to your holy name ! ow I know that I'm not forgotten, when you brought ack the little kindness I did that boy for *your sake*, rid so many blessins to me in the hour of my affliction an' sufferin' ! Childher remimber this, now that 'm goin' to lave yez for ever ! Remember always to elp the stranger, an' thim that's poor an' in sorrow. f you do, God won't forget it to you ; but will bring t back to yez when you stand in need of it, as he done o me this day. You see, childhre dear, how smal rifles o' that kind depend on one another. If I adn't thought of helpin' his Reverence here when he was young and away from his own, he wouldn't think of callin' upon us this day as he was passin'. You see the hand of God is in it, childhre : which it is, indeed, in everything that passes about us, if we could only see it as we ought to do. Thin, but I'd like to look upon your face, Sir, if it's plasin' to you ? A little more to the light, Sir. There, I now see you. Ay, indeed, its changed for the better, it is—the same mild, clear countenance, but not sorrowful, as when I seen it last. Suffer me to put my hand on your head, Sir ; I'd like to bless you before I die, for I can't forget what you undhertook to do for your parents."

The priest sat near him ; but finding that he was scarcely able to raise his hand to his head, he knelt

down, and the farmer, before he communicated the blessing, inquired—

“Musha, Sir, may I ax, wor you able to do anything to help your family as you expected?”

“God,” said the priest, “made me the instrument of raising them from their poverty; they are now comfortable and happy.”

“Ay! Well I knew at the time, an’ I said it, that a blessin’ would attind your endayvours. An’ now resave *my* blessin’. May you never depart from the right way! May the blessin’ of God rest upon you for ever—Amin! Childhre, I’m gettin’ wake; come near me, till, till I bless you, too, for the last time! They wor good childhre, Sir—they were ever an’ always good to me, an’ to their poor mother, your Reverence; an’—God forgive me if it’s a sin!—but I feel a great dale o’ my heart an’ my love fixed upon them. But sure, I’m their father, an’ God, I hope, will look over it! Now, darlins, afore I bless yez, I ax your forgiveness if ever I was harsher to yez than I ought!”

The children, with a simultaneous movement encircled his bed, and could not reply for some minutes.

“Never, father, darlin’! Oh, never did you offend us! Don’t speak in that way, or you’ll break our hearts; but forgive *us*, father asthore! Oh, forgive an’ bless us, an’ don’t remimber against us our folly an’ disobedience, for it’s only now that we see we warn’t towards you as we ought to be. Forgive us an’ pardon us!”

He then made them all kneel around his bed, and with solemn words, and an impressive manner, placed his hand upon their heads, and blessed them with a virtuous father’s last blessing.

He then called for his wife, and the scene became not only more touching, but more elevated. There was an exultation in her manner, and an expression of vivid hope in her eye, arising from the fact of her husband having received, and been soothed by, the *rites* of her church, that gave evident proof of the

unparalleled attachment borne by persons of her class to the Catholic religion. The arrival of our hero had been so unexpected, and the terrors of the tender wife for her husband's soul so great, that the administration of the sacrament almost superseded from her heart every other sensation than that of devotional triumph. Even now, in the midst of her tears, that triumph kindled in her eye with a light that shone in melancholy beauty upon the bed of death. In proportion, however, as the parting scene—which was to be their *last*—began to work with greater power upon her sorrow, so did this expression gradually fade away. Grief for his loss resumed its dominion over her heart so strongly, that their last parting was afflicting even to look upon.

When it was over, Lanigan once more addressed the priest :—

“Now, Sir,” he observed, but with great difficulty, “let me have *your* blessin’ an’ your prayers ; an’ along wid that, your Reverence, if you remember a request I once made to you”——

“I remember it well,” replied the priest ; “you allude to the masses which you wished me to say for you, should I ever receive Orders. Make your mind easy on that point. I not only *shall* offer up mass for the repose of your soul, but I can assure you that I *have* mentioned you *by name* in every mass which I celebrated since my ordination.”

He then proceeded to direct the mind of his dying benefactor to such subjects as were best calculated to comfort and strengthen him.

About day-break the next morning, this man of many virtues, after struggling rather severely for two hours preceding his death, passed into eternity, there to enjoy the recompense of a well-spent life.

When he was dead, the priest, who never left him during the night, approached the bed, and after surveying his benevolent features, now composed in the stillness of death, exclaimed—

“*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for*

they rest from their labours, and their follow them !”

Having uttered the words aloud, he sat down on the bed, buried his face in his handkerchief,

He was now only a short day's journey from home, and as his presence, he knew, would be a restraint upon a family so much in affliction, he bade them farewell, and proceeded on his way. He travelled slowly, and, as every well-known hill appeared to him, his heart beat quickly, his hands gave up its early stores, and his affections were turned themselves for the trial that was before them.

“It is better for me not to arrive,” thought he, “until the family shall have returned from their labour, and are collected about the hearth.”

In the meantime, many an impression of piety and fervid piety came over him, when he reflected upon the incontrovertible proofs of providential protection and interference which had been, during his absence from home, under his struggles, and, at last, his good fortune, so clearly laid before him. “Deepest,” he exclaimed, “is the gratitude I owe to God for what may I never forget to acknowledge it !”

It was now about seven o'clock ; the evening was calm, and the sun shone with that clear amber light which gives warmth, and the power of exciting tenderness to natural scenery. He had already gained an ascent which commanded a view of the rich southwestern country that reposed below. There it lay—his native home—his native parish—bathed in the light of glory of the hour. Its fields were green—its hills shining like loosened silver ; its meadows, all studded with hay-cocks ; its green pastures covered with sheep ; and its unruffled lakes reflecting the sky under which they lay. Here and there a gentle residence rose among the distant trees, and we could recognise the church spire that cut into the western sky on his right. It is true, nothing of grandeur and magnificence of nature was there ; *nothing* was simple in its beauty. The quiet charm

serene light, the air of happiness and peace that reposed upon all he saw, stirred up a thousand tender feelings in a heart whose gentle character resembled that of the prospect which it felt so exquisitely. The smoke of a few farm-houses and cottages rose in blue graceful columns to the air, giving just that appearance of life which was necessary; and a figure or two, with lengthened shadows, moved across the fields and meadows a little below where he stood.

But our readers need not to be told, that there was one spot which, beyond all others, rivetted his attention. On that spot his eager eye rested long and intensely. The spell of its remembrance had clung to his early heart: he had never seen it in his dreams without weeping; and often had the agitation of his imaginary sorrow awoke him with his eyelashes steeped in tears. He looked down on it steadily. At length he was moved with a strong sensation like grief: he sobbed twice or thrice, and the tears rolled in showers from his eyes. His gathering affections were relieved by this: he felt lighter, and in the same slow manner rode onward to his father's house.

To this there were two modes of access: one by a paved bridle-way, or *boreen*, that ran up directly before the door—the other by a green lane, that diverged from the *boreen* about a furlong below the house. He took the latter, certain that the family could not notice his approach, nor hear the noise of his horse's footsteps, until he could arrive at the very threshold. On dismounting, he felt that he could scarcely walk. He approached the door, however, as steadily as he could. He entered—and the family, who had just finished their supper, rose up, as a mark of their respect to the stranger.

"Is this," he inquired, "the house in which Dominick M'Evoy lives?"

"That's my name, Sir," replied Dominick.

"The family, I trust, are—all—well? I have been desired—but no—no—I cannot—FATHER!—MOTHER!"

"It's *him* !" shrieked the mother—"it's *himself* Jemmy !"

"Jemmy !—Jemmy !" shouted the father, with a cry of joy which might be heard far beyond the hills.

"Jemmy !—our poor Jemmy—Jemmy !!" claimed his brothers and sisters.

"Asy, childhre," said the father—"asy ; let the mother to him—let *her* to him. Who has the heart that *she* has ? Vara, asthore—Vara, think of you God of heaven ! what is comin' over her ?—Her back turned !"

"Father, don't remove her," said the son. "I have my arms where they are : it's long since they encircled my neck before. Often—often would I have given the wealth of the universe to be encircled in the blessed and beloved mother's arms ! Yes, yes—V my father—weep, each of you. You see those tears—consider them as a proof that I have never forgotten you ! Beloved mother ! recollect yourself knows me not—her eyes wander !—I fear the sea has been too much for her. Place a chair at the window and I will bring her to the air."

After considerable effort, the mother's faculties were restored, so far as to be merely conscious that our hero was her son. She had not yet shed a tear, but she surveyed his countenance, smiled, and named him, placing her hands upon him, and examined his face with a singular blending of conflicting emotions still without being thoroughly collected.

"I will speak to her," said Jemmy, "in Irish will go directly to her heart :—*Mhair, avourneen ma, laht, anish* !—Mother, my darling, I am with you at last."

"*Shamus, aroon, vick machree, wuil thu lhum ? thu—wuil thu lhum ?*—Jemmy, my beloved, so my heart, are you with me ?—are you—are you with me ?"

"*Ish maheen a tha in, a vair dheelish machree.* is I who am with you, beloved mother of my heart. *She* smiled again—but only for a moment.

looked at him, laid his head upon her bosom, bedewed his face with her tears, and muttered out, in a kind of sweet, musical cadence, the Irish cry of joy.

We are incapable of describing this scene further. Our readers must be contented to know, that the delight and happiness of our hero's whole family were complete. Their son, after many years of toil and struggle, had at length succeeded, by a virtuous course of action, in raising them from poverty to comfort, and in effecting his own object, which was, to become a member of the Catholic priesthood. During all his trials he never failed to rely on God; and it is seldom that those who rely upon Him, when striving to attain a laudable purpose, are ever ultimately disappointed.

* * * * *

(We regret to inform our readers, that the poor scholar is dead!) He did not, in fact, long survive the accomplishment of his wishes. But as we had the particulars of his story from his nearest friends, we thought his virtues of too exalted a nature to pass into oblivion without some record, however humble. He died as he had lived—the friend of God and of man.

J. J. J.

MICKEY M'ROREY,

THE IRISH FIDDLER.

WHAT a host of light-hearted associations are revived by that living fountain of fun and frolic, an Irish fiddler ! Everything connected with him is agreeable, pleasant, jolly. All his anecdotes, songs, jokes, stories, and secrets, bring us back from the pressure and cares of life, to those happy days and nights when the heart was as light as the heel, and both beat time to the exhilarating sound of his fiddle.

The harper is a character looked upon by the Irish rather as a musical curiosity, than a being specially created to contribute to their enjoyment. There is something about him which they do not feel to be in perfect sympathy with their habits and amusements. He is above them, not of them ; and although they respect him, and treat him kindly, yet he is never received among them with that spontaneous ebullition of warmth and cordiality with which they welcome their own musician, the fiddler. The harper, in fact, belongs, or, rather, did belong to the gentry, and to the gentry they are willing to leave him. They listen to his music when he feels disposed to play for them, but it only gratifies their curiosity, instead of enlivening their hearts—a fact sufficiently evident from the circumstance of their seldom attempting to dance to it. This preference, however, of the fiddle to the harp, is a feeling generated by change of times and circumstances, for it is well known that *in days gone by*, when Irish habits were purer, older,

more hereditary than they are now, the harp was favourite instrument of young and old, of high and low.

The only instrument that can be said to rival the harp is the bagpipe ; but every person knows that Ireland is a loving country, and that at our fairs, dances, weddings, and other places of amusement, the young man and his sweetheart are in the habit of indulging in a certain quiet and affectionate kind of conversation, the creamy tones of which are sadly curdled by the sharp jar of the chanter. It is not, in fact, the best instrument for love-making. The drone is an enemy to sentiment, and it is an unpleasant thing to see a pretty blushing girl to find herself put to the necessity of bawling out her consent at the top of her lungs, which she must do, or have the ecstatic ecstasies lost in its drowsy and monotonous murmur. The bagpipe might do for war, to which, with a slight modification, it has been applied ; but in our opinion it is only fit to be danced to by an assembly of people who are hard of hearing. Indeed, we have little doubt but its cultivation might be introduced with good effect as a system of medical treatment, suitable to the pupils of a deaf and dumb institution ; if anything could bring them to the use of their ears, its sharp and stiletto notes surely would effect the object.

The fiddle, however, is the instrument of all others most essential to the enjoyment of an Irishman. Dancing and love are very closely connected, and of course the fiddle is never thought of or heard, without awakening the tenderest and most agreeable emotions. Its music, soft, sweet, and cheerful, is the thing for Paddy, who, under its influence, takes of its spirit, and becomes soft, sweet, and cheerful himself. The very tones of it act like a charm on him, and produce in his head such a bland and thoughtful intoxication, that he finds himself making love just as naturally as he would eat his meals. It is all the sluices of his heart, puts mercury in

his veins, gives honey to a tongue that was, heaven knows, sufficiently sweet without it, and gifts him with a pair of feather heels that Mercury might envy; and to crown all, endows him, while pleading his cause in a quiet corner, with a fertility of invention, and an easy unembarrassed assurance which nothing can surpass. In fact, with great respect for my friend Mr. Bunting, the fiddle it is that *ought* to be our national instrument, as it is that which is most closely and agreeably associated with the best and happiest impulses of the Irish heart. The very language of the people themselves is a proof of this; for whilst neither harp nor bagpipe is ever introduced as illustrating peculiarities of feeling by any reference to their influence, the fiddle is an agreeable instrument in their hands, in more senses than one. Paddy's highest notion of flattery towards the other sex is boldly expressed by an image drawn from it, for when he boasts that he can, by honied words, impress such an agreeable delusion upon his sweetheart as to make her imagine "that there is a fiddler on every rib of the house," there can be no metaphor conceived more strongly or beautifully expressive of the charm which flows from the tones of that sweet instrument. Paddy, however, is very often hit by his own metaphor, at a time when he least expects it. When pleading his cause, for instance, and promising golden days to his fair one, he is not unfrequently met by, "Ay, ay, its all very well now; you're sugar enough, of coorse; but wait 'till we'd be a year married, an' maybe, like so many others that promised what you do, you'd never come to me widout 'hangin' up your fiddle behind the door;" by which she means to charge him with the probability of being agreeable when abroad, but morose in his own family.

Having thus shown that the fiddle and its music are mixed up so strongly with our language, feelings, and amusement, it is now time to say something of the fiddler. In Ireland it is impossible, on looking *through all the classes of society, to find any indi-*

vidual so perfectly free from care, or, in stronger words, so completely happy, as the fiddler, especially if he be blind, which he generally is. His want of sight circumscribes his other wants, and, whilst it diminishes his enjoyments, not only renders him unconscious of their loss, but gives a greater zest to those that are left him, simple and innocent as they are. He is in truth a man whose lot in life is happily cast, and whose lines have fallen in pleasant places. The phase of life which is presented to him, and in which he moves, is one of innocent mirth and harmless enjoyment. Marriages, weddings, dances, and merry-makings of all descriptions, create the atmosphere of mirth and happiness which he ever breathes. With the dark designs, the crimes, and outrages of mankind, he has nothing to do, and his light spirit is never depressed by their influence. Indeed, he may be said with truth to pass through none but the festivals of life, to hear nothing but mirth, to feel nothing but kindness, and to communicate nothing but happiness to all around him. He is at once the source and the centre of all good and friendly feelings. By him the aged man forgets his years, and is agreeably cheated back into youth ; the labourer snatches a pleasant moment from his toil, and is happy ; the careworn ceases to remember the anxieties that press him down : the boy is enraptured with delight, and the child is charmed with a pleasure that he feels to be wonderful.

Surely such a man is important, as filling up with enjoyment so many of the pauses in human misery. He is a thousand times better than a politician, and is a true philosopher without knowing it. Every man is his friend, unless it be a rival fiddler, and he is the friend of every man, with the same exception. Every house, too, every heart, and every hand, is open to him ; he never knows what it is to want a bed, a dinner, or a shilling. Good heavens ! what more than this can the cravings of a human heart desire ! For my part, I do not know what others might aim at ;

but I am of opinion that in such a world as this, the highest proof of a wise man, would be, a wish to live and die an Irish fiddler.

And yet, alas ! there is no condition of life without some remote or contingent sorrow. Many a scene have I witnessed connected with this very subject, that would wring the tears out of any eye, and find a tender pulse in the hardest heart. It is, indeed, a melancholy alternative that devotes the poor sightless lad to an employment that is ultimately productive of so much happiness to himself and others. This alternative is seldom resorted to, unless when some poor child—perhaps a favourite—is deprived of sight by the terrible ravages of the small-pox. In life there is scarcely anything more touching than to witness in the innocent invalid the first effects, both upon himself and his parents, of this woeful privation. The utter helplessness of the pitiable darkling, and his total dependence upon those around him—his unacquaintance with the relative situation of all the places that were familiar to him—his tottering and timid step, and his affecting call of “Mammy, where are you?” joined to the bitter consciousness on her part that the light of affection and innocence will never sparkle in those beloved eyes again—all this constitutes a scene of deep and bitter sorrow. When, however, the sense of his bereavement passes away, and the cherished child grows up to the proper age, a fiddle is procured for him by his parents, if they are able, and if not, a subscription is made up among their friends and neighbours to buy him one. All the family, with tears in their eyes, then kiss and take leave of him; and his mother, taking him by the hand, leads him, as had been previously arranged, to the best fiddler in the neighbourhood, with whom he is left as an apprentice. There is generally no fee required, but he is engaged to hand his master all the money he can make at dances, from the time he is proficient enough to play at them. Such is the simple process of putting a blind boy in the way of becoming acquainted with the science of melody.

In my native parish there were four or five fiddlers—all good in their way ; but the Paganini of the district was the far-famed Mickey M'Rorey. Where Mickey properly lived, I never could actually discover, and for the best reason in the world—he was not at home once in twelve months. As Colley Cibber says in the play, he was “a kind of here-and-thereian—a stranger nowhere.” This, however, mattered little ; for though perpetually shifting day after day from place to place, yet it somehow happened that nobody ever was at a loss where to find him. The truth is, he never felt disposed to travel *incog*, because he knew that his interest must suffer by doing so ; the consequence was, that wherever he went, a little nucleus of local fame always attended him, which rendered it an easy matter to find his whereabouts.

Mickey was blind from his infancy, and, as usual, owed to the small-pox the loss of his eye-sight. He was about the middle size, of rather a slender make, and possessed an intelligent countenance, on which beamed that singular expression of inward serenity so peculiar to the blind. His temper was sweet and even, but capable of rising through the buoyancy of his own humour to a high pitch of exhilaration and enjoyment. The dress he wore, as far as I can remember, was always the same in colour and fabric—to wit, a brown coat, a sober-tinted cotton waistcoat, grey stockings, and black corduroys. Poor Mickey ! I think I see him before me ; his head erect, as the heads of all blind men are, the fiddle-case under his left arm, and his hazel staff held out like a feeler, exploring with experimental pokes the nature of the ground before him, even although some happy urchin leads him onward with an exulting eye ; an honour of which he will boast to his companions for many a mortal month to come.

The first time I ever heard Mickey play was also the first I ever heard a fiddle. Well and distinctly do I remember the occasion. The season was summer—but *summer was* summer then—and a new house

belonging to Frank Thomas had been finished, and was just ready to receive him and his family. The floors of Irish houses in the country generally consist at first of wet clay ; and when this is sufficiently well smoothed and hardened, a dance is known to be an excellent thing to bind and prevent them from cracking. On this occasion the evening had been appointed, and the day was nearly half advanced, but no appearance of the fiddler. The state of excitement in which I found myself could not be described. The name of Mickey M'Rorey had been ringing in my ears for God knows how long, but I had never seen him, or even heard his fiddle. Every two minutes I was on the top of a little eminence looking out for him, my eyes straining out of their sockets, and my head dizzy with the prophetic expectation of rapture and delight. Human patience, however, could bear this painful suspense no longer, and I privately resolved to find Mickey, or perish. I accordingly proceeded across the hills, a distance of about three miles, to a place called Kilnahushogue, where I found him waiting for a guide. At this time I could not have been more than seven years of age ; and how I wrought out my way over the lonely hills, or through what mysterious instinct I was led to him, and that by a path, too, over which I had never travelled before, must be left unrevealed, until it shall please that Power which guides the bee to its home, and the bird for thousands of miles through the air, to disclose the principle upon which it is accomplished.

On our return home I could see the young persons of both sexes flying out to the little eminence I spoke of, looking eagerly towards the spot we travelled from, and immediately scampering in again, clapping their hands and shouting with delight. Instantly the whole village was out, young and old, standing for a moment to satisfy themselves that the intelligence was correct ; after which, about a dozen of the youngsters sprang forward, with the speed of so many antelopes, to *meet us*, whilst the elders returned with a soberer,

but not less satisfied, manner into the houses. Then commenced the usual battle, as to who should be honoured by permission to carry the fiddle-case. Oh ! that fiddle-case ! For seven long years it was an honour exclusively allowed to myself, whenever Mickey attended a dance anywhere at all near us ; and never was the Lord Chancellor's mace—to which, by the way, with great respect for his Lordship, it bore a considerable resemblance—carried with a prouder heart or a more exulting eye. But so it is—

“These little things are great to *little men*.”

“Blood alive, Mickey, you're welcome !” “How is every bone of you, Mickey ? Bedad we gev you up.” “No, we didn't give you up, Mickey ; never heed him ; sure we knew very well you'd not desert the Towny boys—whoo !—Fol de rol lol !” “Ah, Mickey, won't you sing ‘There was a wee devil came over the wall ?’” “To be sure he will, but wait till he comes home and gets his dinner first. Is it off an empty stomach you'd have him to sing ?” “Mickey, give me the fiddle-case, won't you, Mickey ?” “No, to *me*, Mickey.” “Never heed them, Mickey : you promised it to me at the dance in Carntaul.”

“Aisy, boys, aisy. The truth is, none of yez can get the fiddle-case. Shibby, my fiddle, hasn't been well for the last day or two, and can't bear to be carried by any one barrin' myself.”

“Blood alive ! sick is it Mickey ?—an' what ails her ?”

“Why, some o' the doctors says there's a frog in her, an' others that she has got the cholic ; but I'm goin' to give her a dose of balgriffauns, when I get up to the house above. Ould Harry Connolly says she's with-fiddle ; an' if that's true, boys, maybe some o' yez won't be in luck. I'll be able to spare a young fiddle or two among yez.”

Many a tiny hand was clapped, and many an eye was lit up with the hope of getting a young fiddle : for gospel itself was never looked upon to be more true than this assertion of Mickey's. And no wonder.

The fact is, he used to amuse himself by making small fiddles of deal and horse-hair, which he carried about with him, as presents for such youngsters as he took a fancy to. This he made a serious business of, and carried it on with an importance becoming the intimation just given. Indeed, I remember the time when I watched one of them, which I was so happy as to receive from him, day and night, with the hope of being able to report that it was growing larger; for my firm belief was, that in due time it would reach the usual size.

As we went along, Mickey, with his usual tact, got out of us all the information respecting the several courtships of the neighbourhood that had reached us, and as much, too, of the village gossip and scandal as we knew.

Nothing can exceed the overflowing kindness and affection with which the Irish fiddler is received on the occasion of a dance or merry-making; and to do him justice he loses no opportunity of exaggerating his own importance. From habit, and his position among the people, his wit and power of repartee are necessarily cultivated and sharpened. Not one of his jokes ever fails—a circumstance which improves his humour mightily; for nothing on earth sustains it so much as knowing that, whether good or bad, it will be laughed at. Mickey, by the way, was a bachelor, and, though blind, was able, as he himself used to say, to see through his ears better than another could through the eyes. He knew every voice at once, and every boy and girl in the parish by name, the moment he heard them speak.

On reaching the house he is bound for, he either partakes of, or at least is offered, refreshment, after which comes the ecstatic moment to the youngsters: but all this is done by due and solemn preparation. First he calls for a pair of scissors, with which he pairs or seems to pair his nails; then asks for a piece of rosin, and in an instant half a dozen boys are off at a break-neck pace, to the next shoe-maker's, to procure

it ; whilst in the mean time he deliberately pulls a piece out of his pocket and rosins his bow. But, heavens ! what a ceremony the opening of that fiddle case is ! The manipulation of the blind man as he runs his hand down to the key-hole—the turning of the key—the taking out of the fiddle—the twang twang—and then the first ecstatic sound, as the bow is drawn across the strings ; then comes a screwing ; then a delicious saw or two ; again another screwing—twang twang—and away he goes with the favourite tune of the good woman, for such is the etiquette upon these occasions. The house is immediately thronged with the neighbours, and a preliminary dance is taken, in which the old folks, with good-humoured violence, are literally dragged out, and forced to join. Then come the congratulations—“ Ah, Jack, you could do it wanst,” says Mickey, “ an’ can still ; you have a kick in you yet.” “ Why, Mickey, I seen dancin’ in my time,” the old man will reply, his brow relaxed by a remnant of his former pride, and the hilarity of the moment, “ but you see the breath isn’t what it used to be wid me, when I could dance the *Baltehorum Jig* on the bottom of a ten gallon cask. But I think a glass o’ whiskey will do us no harm after that. Heighho !—well, well—I’m sure I thought *my* dancin’ days wor over.”

“ Bedad an’ you wor matched any how,” rejoined the fiddler. “ Molshy carried as light a heel as ever you did ; sorra a woman of her years ever I seen could cut the buckle wid her. You would know the tune on her feet still.”

“ Ah, Mickey, the truth is,” the good woman would say, “ we have no sich dancin’ now as there was in my days. Thry that glass.”

“ But as good fiddlers, Molshy, eh ? Here’s to you both, and long may ye live to shake the toe ! Whoo ! be dad that’s great stuff. Come now sit down, Jack, till I give you your ould favourite, ‘ *Cannie Soogah*.’ ”

These were happy moments and happy times, which

might well be looked upon as picturing the simple manners of country life, with very little of moral shadow to obscure the cheerfulness which lit up the Irish heart and hearth into humble happiness. Mickey, with his usual good nature, never forgot the younger portion of his audience. After entertaining the old and full-grown, he would call for a key, one end of which he placed in his mouth, in order to make the fiddle sing for the children their favourite song, beginning with

"Oh ! grand-mamma, will you squeeze my wig ?"

This he did in such a manner, through the medium of the key, that the words seemed to be spoken by the instrument, and not by himself. After this was over, he would sing us, to his own accompaniment, another favourite, "There was a wee devil looked over the wall," which generally closed that portion of the entertainment, so kindly designed for *us*.

Upon those moments I have often witnessed marks of deep and pious feeling, occasioned by some memory of the absent or the dead, that were as beautiful as they were affecting. If, for instance, a favourite son or daughter happened to be removed by death, the father or mother, remembering the air which was loved best by the departed, would pause a moment, and with a voice full of sorrow, say, "Mickey, there is *one tune* that I would like to hear ; I love to think of it, and to hear it ; I do, for the sake of them that's gone—my darlin' son that's lyin' low : it was he that loved it. His ear is closed against it now ; but for *his* sake—ay, for your sake, avourneen machree—we will hear it once more."

Mickey always played such tunes in his best style, and amidst a silence that was only broken by sobs, suppressed moanings, and the other tokens of profound sorrow. These gushes, however, of natural feeling soon passed away. In a few minutes the smiles returned, the mirth broke out again, and the lively dance went on as if their hearts had been incapable of such affection for the dead—affection at once

so deep and tender. But many a time the light of cheerfulness plays along the stream of Irish feeling, when cherished sorrow lies removed from the human eye far down from the surface.

These preliminary amusements being now over, Mickey is conducted to the dance-house, where he is carefully installed in the best chair, and immediately the dancing commences. It is not my purpose to describe an Irish dance here, having done it more than once elsewhere. It is enough to say that Mickey is now in his glory; and proud may the young man be who fills the honourable post of his companion, and sits next him. He is a living store-house of intelligence, a travelling directory for the parish—the lover's text-book—the young woman's best companion; for where is the courtship going on of which he is not cognizant? where is there a marriage on the tapis, with the particulars of which he is not acquainted? He is an authority whom nobody would think of questioning. It is now, too, that he scatters his jokes about; and so correct and well trained is his ear, that he can frequently name the young man who dances, by the peculiarity of his step.

"Ah ha! Paddy Brien, you're there? Sure I'd know the sound of your smoothin'-irons any where. Is it thrue, Paddy, that you wor sint for down to Errigle Keerogue, to kill the clocks for Dan M'Mahon? But, nabuklish! Paddy, what 'll you have?"

"Is that Grace Reilly on the flure? Faix, avourneen, you can do it; devil o' your likes I see any where. I'll lay Shibby to a penny trump that you could dance your own namesake—the *Caleen dhas dhun*, the bonny brown girl—upon a spider's cobweb, widout breakin' it. Don't be in a hurry, Grace dear, to tie the knot; *I'll* wait for you."

Several times in the course of the night a plate is brought round, and a collection made for the fiddler: this was the moment when Mickey used to let the jokes fly in every direction. The timid he shamed *into liberality*, the vain he praised, and the niggardly

he assailed by open hardy satire ; all managed, however, with such an under-current of good humour, that no one could take offence. No joke ever told better than that of the broken string. Whenever this happened at night, Mickey would call out to some soft fellow, "Blood alive, Ned Martin, will you bring me a candle ? I've broken a string." The unthinking young man, forgetting that he was blind, would take the candle in a hurry, and fetch it to him.

"Faix, Ned, I knew you wor jist fit for't ; houldin' a candle to a dark man ! Isn't he a beauty, boys ?—look at him, girls—as 'cute as a pancake."

It is unnecessary to say, that the mirth on such occasions was convulsive. Another similar joke was also played off by him against such as he knew to be ungenerous at the collection.

"Paddy Smith, I want a word wid you. I'm goin' across the counthry as far as Ned Donnelly's, and I want you to help me along the road, as the night is dark."

"To be sure, Mickey. I'll bring you over as snug as if you wor on a clane plate, man alive !"

"Thank you, Paddy ; throth you've the dacency in you ; an' kind father for you, Paddy. Maybe I'll do as much for you some other time."

Mickey never spoke of this until the trick was played off, after which, he published it to the whole parish ; and Paddy, of course, was made a standing jest for being so silly as to think that night or day had any difference to a man who could not see.

Thus passed the life of Mickey M'Rokey, and thus pass the lives of most of his class, serenely and happily. As the sailor to his ship, the sportsman to his gun, so is the fiddler attached to his fiddle. His hopes and pleasures, though limited, are full. His heart is necessarily light, for he comes in contact with the best and brightest side of life and nature ; and the consequence is, that their mild and mellow lights are reflected on and from himself. I am ignorant *whether* poor Mickey is dead or not ; but I dare say

ie forgets the boy to whose young spirit he communicated so much delight, and who often danced with a buoyant and careless heart to the pleasant notes of his fiddle. Mickey M'Rorey, farewell! Whether living or dead, peace be with you.*

* Mickey, who is still living, remembers the writer of this well, and felt very much flattered on hearing the above notice of himself read.—
W. C., 1845.

BUCKRAM-BACK,

THE COUNTRY DANCING-MASTER.

IN those racy old times, when the manners and customs of Irishmen were more simple and pastoral than are at present, dancing was cultivated as one of the chief amusements of life, and the dancing-master looked upon as a person essentially necessary to the proper enjoyment of our national recreation. Of the amusements peculiar to our population, dancing is by far the most important, although certainly less so now than it has been, even within our memory. In Ireland it may be considered as a just indication of the spirit and character of the people; so much so, that it would be extremely difficult to find any test so significant of the Irish heart as its varied impulses, as the dance, when contemplated in its most comprehensive spirit. In the first place, no people dance so well as the Irish, and for that reason in the world, as we shall show. Dancing every one must admit, although a most delicate amusement, is not a simple, nor distinct, nor private one. On the contrary, it is merely a happy and agreeable method of enjoying music; its whole spirit and character must necessarily depend upon the power of the heart to *feel* the melody, which the limbs and body move. Every nation, however remarkable for a susceptibility of music, and remarkable for a love of dancing, unless religion or some other adequate obstacle, arising from an unhealthy condition of society, interposes to prevent it. *Music and dancing being in fact as dependent*

one on the other as cause and effect, it requires little argument to prove that the Irish, who are so sensitively alive to the one, should in a very high degree excel at the other ; and accordingly it is so.

Nobody, unless one who has seen and *also felt* it, can conceive the incredible, nay, the inexplicable exhilaration of the heart, which a dance communicates to the peasantry of Ireland. Indeed, it resembles not so much enthusiasm as inspiration. Let a stranger take his place among those who are assembled at a dance in the country, and mark the change which takes place in Paddy's whole temperament, physical and moral. He first rises up rather indolently, selects his own sweetheart, and assuming such a station on the floor as renders it necessary that both should "face the fiddler," he commences. On the dance then goes, quietly at the outset ; gradually he begins to move more sprightly ; by and bye the right hand is up, and a crack of the fingers is heard ; in a minute afterwards both hands are up, and two cracks are heard, the hilarity and brightness of his eye all the time keeping pace with the growing enthusiasm that is coming over him, and which eye, by the way, is most lovingly fixed upon, or, we would rather say, *into*, that of his modest partner. From that partner he never receives an *open* gaze in return, but in lieu of this, an occasional glance, quick as thought, and brilliant as a meteor, seems to pour into him a delicious fury that is made up of love—sometimes a little of whiskey, kindness, pride of his activity, and a reckless force of momentary happiness that defies description. Now commences the dance in earnest. Up he bounds in a fling or a caper—crack go the fingers—cut and treble go the feet, heel and toe, right and left. Then he flings the right heel up to the ham, up again the left, the whole face in a furnace-heat of ecstatic delight.

"Whoo ! whoo ! your sowl ! Move your elbow, Mickey, (this to the fiddler). Quicker, quicker, man alive, or you'll lose sight of me. Whoo ! Judy, that's the girl ; handle your feet, avourneen ; that's it,

acushla ! stand to me ! Hurroo for our side of the house !”

And thus does he proceed with a vigour, and an agility, and a truth of time, that are incredible, especially when we consider the whirlwind of enjoyment which he has to direct. The conduct of his partner, whose face is lit up into a modest blush, is evidently tinged with his enthusiasm—for who could resist it?—but it is exhibited with great natural grace, joined to a delicate vivacity that is equally gentle and animated, and, in our opinion, precisely what dancing in a female ought to be—a blending of healthful exercise and innocent enjoyment.

There is a considerable variety of dances in Ireland, from the simple “reel of two” up to the country-dance, all of which are mirthful. There are, however, others which are serious, and may be looked upon as the exponents of the pathetic spirit of our country. Of the latter, I fear, several are altogether lost ; and I question whether there be many persons now alive in Ireland who know much about the *Horo Lheig*, which, from the word it begins with, must necessarily have been danced only on mournful occasions. It is only at wakes and funereal customs in those remote parts of the country where old usages are most pertinaciously clung to, that any elucidation of the *Horo Lheig* and others of our forgotten dances could be obtained. At present, I believe, the only serious one we have is the *cotillon*, or, as they term it in the country, the cut-a-long. I myself have witnessed, when very young, a dance, which, like the hornpipe, was performed but by one man. This, however, was the only point in which they bore to each other any resemblance. The one I allude to must, in my opinion, have been of Druidic or Magian descent. It was not necessarily performed to music, and could not be danced without the emblematic aids of a stick and handkerchief. It was addressed to an individual passion, and was, unquestionably, one of those symbolic dances that were used in pagan rites ;

and had the late Henry O'Brien seen it, there is no doubt but he would have seized upon it as a felicitous illustration of his system.

Having now said all we have to say here about Irish dances, it is time we should say something about the Irish dancing-master; and be it observed, that we mean him of the old school, and not the poor degenerate creature of the present day, who, unless in some remote parts of the country, is scarcely worth description, and has little of the national character about him.

Like most persons of the itinerant professions, the old Irish dancing-master was generally a bachelor, having no fixed residence, but living from place to place within *his own walk*, beyond which he seldom or never went. The farmers were his patrons, and his visits to their houses always brought a holiday spirit along with them. When he came, there was sure to be a dance in the evening after the hours of labour, he himself good-naturedly supplying them with the music. In return for this they would get up a little underhand collection for him, amounting probably to a couple of shillings or half-a-crown, which some of them, under pretence of taking the snuff-box out of his pocket to get a pinch, would delicately and ingeniously slip into it, lest he might feel the act as bringing down the dancing-master to the level of the mere fiddler. He, on the other hand, not to be outdone in kindness, would, at the conclusion of the little festivity, desire them to lay down a door, on which he usually danced a few favourite hornpipes to the music of his own fiddle. This, indeed, was the great master-feat of his art, and was looked upon as such by himself, as well as by the people.

Indeed, the old dancing-master had some very marked outlines of character peculiar to himself. His dress, for instance, was always far above the fiddler's, and this was the pride of his heart. He also made it a point to wear a castor, or Caroline hat, be the same "shocking bad" or otherwise; but, above all things, his soul within him was set upon a watch, and

no one could gratify him more, than by asking him before company what o'clock it was. He also contrived to carry an ornamental staff, made of ebony, hickory, mahogany, or some rare description of cane—which, if possible, had a silver head and a silk tassel. This the dancing-masters in general seemed to consider as a kind of baton or wand of office, without which I never yet knew one of them to go. But of all the parts of dress used to discriminate them from the fiddler, we must place, as standing far before the rest, the dancing-master's pumps and stockings, for shoes he seldom wore. The utmost limit of their ambition appeared to be such a jaunty neatness about that part of them in which the genius of their business lay, as might indicate the extraordinary lightness and activity which were expected from them by the people, in whose opinion the finest stocking, the lightest shoe, and the most symmetrical leg, uniformly denoted the most accomplished teacher.

The Irish dancing-master was also a great hand at match-making, and indeed some of them were known to negotiate as such between families as well as individual lovers, with all the ability of a first-rate diplomatist. Unlike the fiddler, the dancing-master had fortunately the use of his eyes; and as there is scarcely any scene in which to a keen observer the symptoms of the passion—to wit, blushings, glances, squeezes of the hand, and stealthy whisperings—are more frequent or significant, so is it no wonder indeed that a sagacious looker-on, such as he generally was, knew how to avail himself of them, and to become, in many instances, a necessary party to their successful issue.

In the times of our fathers, it pretty frequently happened that the dancing-master professed another accomplishment, which in Ireland, at least, where it is born with us, might appear to be a superfluous one; we mean that of fencing, or to speak more correctly, cudgel-playing. Fencing-schools of this class were *nearly as common* in these times as dancing-schools,

and it was not at all unusual for one man to teach both.

After all, the old dancing-master, in spite of his most strenuous efforts to the contrary, bore, in simplicity of manners, in habits of life, and in the happy spirit which he received from, and impressed upon, society, a distant, but not indistinct resemblance to the fiddler. Between these two, however, no good feeling subsisted. The one looked up at the other as a man who was unnecessarily and unjustly placed above him ; whilst the other looked down upon him as a mere drudge, through whom those he taught practised their accomplishments. This petty rivalry was very amusing, and the "boys," to do them justice, left nothing undone to keep it up. The fiddler had certainly the best of the argument, whilst the other had the advantage of a higher professional position. The one was more loved, the other more respected. Perhaps very few things in humble life could be so amusing to a speculative mind, or at the same time capable of affording a better lesson to human pride, than the almost miraculous skill with which the dancing-master contrived, when travelling, to carry his fiddle about him, so as that it might not be seen, and he himself mistaken for nothing but a fiddler. This was the sorest blow his vanity could receive, and a source of endless vexation to all his tribe. Our manners, however, are changed, and neither the fiddler nor the dancing-master possesses the fine mellow tints, nor that depth of colouring, which formerly brought them and their rich household associations home at once to the heart.

One of the most amusing specimens of the dancing-master that I ever met, was the person alluded to at the close of my paper on the Irish Fiddler, under the nickname of Buckram-Back. This man had been a drummer in the army for some time, where he had learned to play the fiddle ; but it appears that he possessed no relish whatever for a military life, as his *abandonment of it* without even the usual forms of a

discharge or furlough, together with a back that become cartilaginous from frequent flogging, abundantly testify. It was from the latter circumstance that he had received his nickname.

Buckram-Back was a dapper little fellow a rich Tipperary brogue, crossed by a lofty strillegitimate English, which he picked up whilst a in the army. His habiliments sat as tight upon as he could readily wear them, and were all a shabby-genteel class. His crimped black coat closely worn second-hand, and his crimped face as much of a second-hand as the coat. I think his little pumps, little white stockings, his a drab breeches, his hat, smart in its cock but br to a polish and standing upon three hairs, together with his tight questionably-coloured gloves, all a me. Certainly he was the jauntiest little cock—quite a blood, ready to fight any man, and a defender of the fair sex, whom he never add except in that high-flown bombastic style so agree to most of them, called by their flatterers the commentary, and by their friends the fulsome. He in fact a public man, and up to every thing. I met him at every fair, where he only had time to give you a wink as he passed, being just then engaged in a very particular affair; but he would tell you. At cock-fights he was a very busy personage, and an angry better from half-a-crown downwards. At the fairs he was a knowing fellow, always shook hands with the winning jockey, and then looked pompously at the crowd that folks might see that he was hand and glove with the people of importance. The house where Buckram-Back kept his school, which was open only after hours of labour, was an uninhabited cabin, the roof of which, at a particular spot, was supported by a post that stood upright from the floor. It was built on an elevated situation, and commanded a fine view of the whole country for miles about it. A pleasant sight it was to see the modest and pretty girls, dressed in their best frocks and ribbons, radiating in

groups from all directions, accompanied by their partners or lovers, making way through the fragrant summer fields, of a calm cloudless evening, to this happy scene of innocent amusement.

And yet what an epitome of general life, with its passions, jealousies, plots, calumnies, and contentions, did this little segment of society present! There was the shrew, the slattern, the coquette, and the prude, as sharply marked within this their humble sphere, as if they appeared on the world's wider stage, with half its wealth and all its temptations to draw forth their prevailing foibles. There, too, was the bully, the rake, the liar, the coxcomb, and the coward, each as perfect and distinct in his kind as if he had run through a lengthened course of fashionable dissipation, or spent a fortune in acquiring his particular character. The elements of the human heart, however, and the passions that make up the general business of life, are the same in high and low, and exist with impulses as strong in the cabin as in the palace. The only difference is, that they have not equal room to play.

Buckram-Back's system, in originality of design, in comic conception of decorum, and in the easy practical assurance with which he wrought it out, was never equalled, much less surpassed. Had the impudent little rascal confined himself to dancing as usually taught, there would have been nothing so ludicrous or uncommon in it; but no: he was such a stickler for example in every thing, that no other mode of instruction would satisfy him. Dancing! Why, it was the least part of what he taught or professed to teach.

In the first place, he undertook to teach every one of us—for I had the honour of being his pupil—how to enter a drawing-room "in the most fashionable manner alive," as he said himself.

Secondly. He was the only man, he said, who could in the most agreeable and polite style teach a gentleman how to salute, or, as he termed it, how to

shilote, a leedy. This he taught, he said, wid great success.

Thirdly. He could taich every leedy and gintleman how to make the most beautiful bow or curchy on airth, by only imitating himself—one that would cause a thousand people, if they were all present, to think that it was particularly intended only for aich o' themselves!

Fourthly. He taught the whole art o' courtship wid all peliteness and success, accordin' as it was practised in Paris durin' the last saison.

Fifthly. He could taich thim how to write love-letthers and valentines accordin' to the Great Macademy of compliments, which was supposed to be invented by Bonaparte when he was writing love-letthers to both his wives.

Sixthly. He was the only person who could taich the famous dance called Sir Roger de Coverly, or the Helter-Skelter Drag, which comprehended widin itself all the advantages and beauties of his whole system—in which every gentleman was at liberty to pull every leedy where he plaised, and every leedy was at liberty to go wherever he pulled her.

With such advantages in prospect, and a method of instruction so agreeable, it is not to be wondered at that this establishment was always in a most flourishing condition. The truth is, he had it so contrived that every gentleman should salute his lady as often as possible, and for this purpose actually invented dances, in which not only should every gentleman salute every lady, but every lady, by way of returning the compliment, should render a similar kindness to every gentleman. Nor had his male pupils all this prodigality of salutation to themselves, for the amorous little rascal always commenced first and ended last, in order, he said, that they might *catch* the manner from himself. "I do this, leedies and gintlemen, as your moral (model), and because it's part o' *my* sytem—ahem!"

And then he would perk up his little hard face, that

was too barren to produce more than an abortive smile, and twirl like a wagtail over the floor, in a manner that he thought irresistible.

Whether Buckram-Back was the only man who tried to reduce kissing to a system of education in this country, I do not know. It is certainly true that many others of his stamp made a knowledge of the arts and mode of courtship, like him, a part of the course. The forms of love-letters, valentines, &c., were taught their pupils of both sexes, with many other polite particulars, which it is to be hoped have disappeared for ever.

One thing, however, to the honour of our country-women we are bound to observe, which is, that we do not remember a single result incompatible with virtue to follow from the little fellow's system, which, by the way, was in *this* respect peculiar only to himself, and not the general custom of the country. Several weddings, unquestionably, we had, more than might otherwise have taken place, but in not one instance have we known any case in which a female was brought to unhappiness or shame.

We shall now give a brief sketch of Buckram-Back's manner of tuition, begging our readers at the same time to rest assured that any sketch we could give would fall far short of the original.

"Paddy Corcoran, walk out an' 'inther your draw-in'-room ; an' let Miss Judy Hanratty go out along wid you, an' come in as Mrs. Corcoran."

"Faith, I'm afeard, masther, I'll make a bad hand of it ; but sure, it's something to have Judy here to keep me in countenance."

"Is that by way of compliment, Paddy ? Mr. Corcoran, you should ever an' always spaik to a leedy in an alyblasther tone ; for that's the cut." [*Paddy and Judy retire.*]

"Mickey Scanlan, come up here, now that we're braithin' a little ; an' you Miss Grauna Mulholland, come up along wid him. Miss Mulholland, you are *masther* of your five positions and your fifteen atti-

tudes, I believe?" "Yes, sir." "Very well, Miss Mickey Scanlan—ahem—*Misther* Scanlan, can you perform the positions also, Mickey?"

"Yes, sir; but you remimber I stuck at the eleventh altitude."

"Attitude, sir—no matther. Well, *Misther* Scanlan, do you know how to shiloote a leedy, Mickey?"

"Faix, it's hard to say, sir, till we thry; but I'm very willin' to larn it. I'll do my best, an' the best can do no more."

"Very well—ahem! Now merk me, *Misther* Scanlan; you approach your leedy in this style, bowin' politely, as I do. Miss Mulholland, will you allow me the honour of a heavenly shiloote? Don't bow, ma'am; you are to curchy, you know; a little lower *eef* you please. Now you say, 'Wid the greatest pleasure in life, sir, an' many thanks for the feevour.' (*Smack.*) There, now, you are to make another curchy politely, an' say, 'Thank you, kind sir, I owe you one.' Now, *Misther* Scanlan, proceed."

"I'm to imitate you, masther, as well as I can, sir, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, you are to imiteet *me*. But hould, sir; did you see me lick my lips or pull up my breeches? Be gorra, that's shockin' unswintemintal. First make a curchy, a bow I mane, to Miss Grauna. Stop again, sir; are you goin' to strangle the leedy? Why, one would think that it's about to teek laive of her for ever you are. Gently, *Misther* Scanlan; gently, Mickey. There:—well, that's an improvement. Practice, *Misther* Scanlan, practice will do all, Mickey; but don't smack so loud, though. Hilloo, gentlemen! where's our drawin'-room folk? Go out, one of you, for *Misther* an' Mrs. Paddy Corcoran."

Corcoran's face now appears peeping in at the door, lit up with a comic expression of genuine fun, from whatever cause it may have proceeded.

"Aisy, *Misther* Corcoran; an' where's Mrs. Corcoran, sir?"

"Are we both to come in together, masther?"

"Certainly. Turn out both your toeses—turn them out, I say."

"Faix, sir, it's aisier said than done wid some of us."

"I know that, Mr. Corcoran ; but practice is every thing. The bow-legs are strongly against you, I grant. Hut, tut, Misther Corcoran—why, if your toes wor where your heels is, you'd be exactly in the first position, Paddy. Well, both of you turn out your toeses ; look street forward ; clap your caubeen—hem !—your castor undher your ome (arm), an' walk into the middle of the flure, wid your head up. Stop, take care o' the post. Now, take your caubeen, castor I mane, in your right hand ; give it a flourish. Aisy, Mrs. Hanratty—Corcoran I mane—it's not *you* that's to flourish. Well, flourish your castor, Paddy, and thin make a graceful bow to the company. Leedies and gintlemen"—

"Leedies and gintlemen"—

"I'm your most obadient sarvint"—

"I'm your most obadient sarwint."

"Tuts, man alive ! that's not a bow. Look at this : *there's* a bow for you. Why, instead of meeking a bow, you appear as if you wor goin' to sit down wid an embargo (lumbago) in your back. Well, practice is every thing ; an' there's luck in *laisure*."

"Dick Doorish, will you come up, and thry if you can meek any thing of that threblin' step. You're a purty lad, Misther Doorish, wid a pair o' left legs an you, to expect to larn to dance ; but don't despeer, man alive. I'm not afeard but I'll meek a graceful slip o' you yet. Can you meek a curchy?"

"Not right, sir, I doubt."

"Well, sir, I know that ; but, Misther Doorish, you ought to know how to meek both a bow and a curchy. Whin you marry a wife, Misther Doorish, it mightn't come wrong for you to know how to taich her a curchy. Have you the *gad* and *suggaun* wid you?" "Yes, sir." "Very well, on wid them ; the *suggaun* on the right foot, or what ought to be the right foot, an' the *gad* upon what ought to be the left. Are you ready?"

"Yes, sir." "Come, thin, do as I bid you—Rise upon suggaun an' sink upon gad; rise upon suggaun an' sink upon gad; rise upon—Hould, sir; you're sinkin' upon suggaun an' risin' upon gad, the very thing begad you ought *not* to do. But, God help you! sure you're left-legged! Ah, Misther Doorish, it 'ud be a long time before you'd be able to dance Jig Polthogue, or the College hornpipe upon a drum-head, as I often did. However, don't despeer, Misther Doorish; if I could only get you to know your right leg—but, God help you! sure you hav'nt such a thing—from your left, I'd make something of you yet, Dick."

The Irish dancing-masters were eternally at daggers-drawn among themselves; but as they seldom met, they were forced to abuse each other at a distance, which they did with a virulence and scurrility proportioned to the space between them. Buckram-Back had a rival of this description, who was a sore thorn in his side. His name was Paddy Fitzpatrick, and from having been a horse-jockey, he gave up the turf, and took to the calling of a dancing-master. Buckram-Back sent a message to him to the effect that "if he could not dance Jig Polthogue on the drum-head, he had better hould his tongue for ever." To this Paddy replied, by asking if he was the man to dance the Connaught Jockey upon the saddle of a blood-horse, and the animal at a three-quarter gallop.

At length the friends on each side, from a natural love of fun, prevailed upon them to decide their claims as follows:—Each master with twelve of his pupils, was to dance against his rival with twelve of his; the match to come off on the top of Mallybeny hill, which commanded a view of the whole parish. I have already mentioned that in Buckram-Back's school there stood near the middle of the floor a post, which, according to some new manœuvre of his own, was very convenient as a guide to the dancers when going through the figure. Now, at the spot where this post stood it ~~was~~ necessary to make a curve, in order to form part

of the figure of eight, which they were to follow ; but as many of them were rather impenetrable to a due conception of the line of beauty, he forced them to turn round the post rather than make an acute angle of it, which several of them did. Having premised thus much, we proceed with our narrative.

At length they met, and it would have been a matter of much difficulty to determine their relative merits, each was such an admirable match for the other. When Buckram-Back's pupils, however, came to perform, they found that the absence of the post was their ruin. To the post they had been trained—accustomed ;—with *it* they could dance ; but wanting that, they were like so many ships at sea without rudders or compasses. Of course a scene of ludicrous confusion ensued, which turned the laugh against poor Buckram-Back, who stood likely to explode with shame and venom. In fact he was in an agony.

"Gintlemen, turn the post !" he shouted, stamping upon the ground, and clenching his little hands with fury ; "leedies, remimber the post ! Oh, for the honour of Kilnahushogue don't be bate. The post ! gintlemen ; leedies, the post, if you love me. Murdher alive, the post !"

"Be gorra, masther, the jockey will distance us," replied Bob Magawly ; "it's likely to be the *winnin'-post* to him, anyhow."

"Any money," shouted the little fellow, "any money for long Sam Sallaghan ; h'd do the post to the life. Mind it, boys dear, mind it or we're lost. Divil a bit they heed me ; it's a flock o' bees or sheep they're like. Sam Sallaghan, where are you ? The post, you blackguards !"

"Oh, masther dear, if we had even a fishin'-rod, or a crowbar, or a poker, we might do yet. But, anyhow, we had better give in, for it's only worse we're gettin'."

At this stage of the proceedings Paddy came over, and, making a low bow, asked him, "Arra, how do you feel, Misther Dogherty ? for such was Buckram Back's name.

"Sir," replied Buckram-Back, bowing low, however in return, "I'll take the shine out of you yet. O you shilote a leedy wid me?—that's the chat! Com gentlemen, show them what's betther than fifty pos—shilote your partners like Irishmen. Kilnahu hogue for ever!"

The scene that ensued baffles all description. The fact is, the little fellow had them trained, as it were to kiss in platoons, and the spectators were literally convulsed with laughter at this most novel and ludicrous character which Buckram-Back gave to his defeat, and the ceremony which he introduced. The truth is, he turned the laugh completely against his rival, and swaggered off the ground in high spirit exclaiming, "He know how to shilote a leedy! While the poor spalpeen never kissed any woman but his mother, an' her only when she was dyin'. Hurra for Kilnahunogue!"

Such, reader, is a slight and very imperfect sketch of an Irish dancing-master, which, if it possesses any merit at all, is to be ascribed to the circumstance that it is drawn from life, and combines, however faintly, most of the points essential to our conception of the character.

MARY MURRAY,

THE IRISH MATCH-MAKER.

THOUGH this word at a glance may be said to explain itself, yet lest our English or Scotch readers might not clearly understand its meaning, we shall briefly give them such a definition of it as will enable them to comprehend it in its full extent. The Irish match-maker, then, is a person selected to conduct reciprocity treaties of the heart between lovers themselves in the first instance, or, where the principal parties are indifferent, between their respective families, when the latter happen to be of opinion that it is a safer and more prudent thing to consult the interest of the young folk rather than their inclination. In short, the match-maker is the person engaged in carrying from one party to another all the messages, letters, tokens, presents, and secret communications of the tender passion, in whatever shape or character the said parties may deem it proper to transmit them. The match-maker, therefore, is a general negotiator in all such matters of love or interest as are designed by the principals or their friends to terminate in the honourable bond of marriage; for with nothing morally improper or licentious, or approaching to the character of an intrigue, will the regular Irish match-maker have anything at all to do. The match-maker, therefore, after all, is only the creature of necessity, and is never engaged by an Irishman unless to remove such preliminary obstacles as may stand in the way of his own direct operations. In point of fact, the

match-maker is nothing but a pioneer, who, after the plan of the attack has been laid down, clears away some of the rougher difficulties, until the regular advance is made, the siege opened in due form, and the citadel successfully entered by the principal party.

We have said thus much to prevent our fair neighbours of England and Scotland from imagining that because such a character as the Irish match-maker exists at all, Irishmen are personally deficient in the fluent energy which is so necessary to express the emotions of the tender passion. Addison has proved to the satisfaction of any rational mind that modesty and assurance are inseparable—that a blushing face may accompany a courageous, nay, a desperate hero—and that, on the contrary, an abundance of assurance may be associated with a very handsome degree of modesty. In love matters, I grant, modesty is the forte of an Irishman, whose character in this respect has been unconsciously hit off by the poet. Indeed he may truly be termed *vultus ingenui puer, ingenique pudoris*; which means, when translated, that looking for a wife an Irishman is “a boy of an *et* face, and remarkable modesty.”

At the head of the match-makers, and far above competitors, stands the Irish midwife, of whose abilities in this way it is impossible to speak too highly. And let not our readers imagine that the duties which devolve upon her, as well as upon match-makers general, are slight or easily discharged. To conduct a matter of this kind ably, great tact, knowledge of character, and very delicate handling, are necessary. She must be incorruptible, faithful to both parties, not to give offence to either, and to obviate detection in case of secret bias or partiality, demand talents of no common order. The amount of fortune is often to be regulated—the good qualities of the parties placed before the best, or, what is often still more judicious, in the most suitable light—and when there happens to be a scarcity of the commodity, it must be furnished from her own invention. The miser is to be softened, the

contemptuous tone of the purse-proud *bodagh* lowered without offence, the crafty cajoled, and sometimes, the unsuspecting over-reached. Now, all this requires an able hand, as match-making in general among the Irish does. Indeed I question whether the williest politician that ever attempted to manage a treaty of peace between two hostile powers could have a more difficult card to play than often falls to the lot of the Irish match-maker.

The midwife, however, from her confidential intercourse with the sex, and the respect with which both young and old of them look upon her, is peculiarly well qualified for the office. She has seen the youth shoot up and ripen into the young man—she has seen the young man merged into the husband, and the husband very frequently lost in the wife. Now, the marks and tokens by which she noted all this are as perceptible in the young of this day as they were in the young of fifty years ago ; she consequently knows from experience how to manage each party, so as to bring about the consummation which she so devoutly wishes.

Upon second thoughts, however, we are inclined to think after all, that the right of precedence upon this point does not exclusively belong to the midwife ; or at least, that there exists another person who contests it with her so strongly that we are scarcely capable of determining their respective claims : this is the *Cosherer*. The cosherer in Ireland is a woman who goes from one relation's house to another, from friend to friend, from acquaintance to acquaintance—is always welcome, and uniformly well treated. The very extent of her connexions makes her independent ; so that if she receives an affront, otherwise a cold reception, from one, she never feels it to affect her comfort, but, on the contrary, carries it about with her in the shape of a complaint to the rest, and details it with such a rich spirit of vituperative enjoyment, that we believe in our soul some of her friends, knowing *what healthful* occupation it gives her, actually

affront her from pure kindness. The cosherer is the very impersonation of industry. Unless when asleep, no mortal living ever saw her hands idle. Her principal employment is knitting; and whether she sits, stands, or walks, there she is with the end of the stocking under her arm, knit, knit, knitting. She also sews and quilts; and whenever a quilting is going forward she can tell you at once in what neighbour's house the quilting-frame was used last, and where it is now to be had; and when it has been got, she is all bustle and business, ordering and commanding about her—her large red three-cornered pincushion hanging conspicuously at her side, a lump of chalk in one hand, and a coil of twine in the other, ready to mark the pattern, whether it be wave, square, or diamond.

The cosherer is always dressed with neatness and comfort, but generally wears something about her that reminds one of a day gone by, and may be considered as the lingering remnant of some old custom that has fallen into disuse. This, slight as it is, endears her to many, for it stands out as the memorial of some old and perhaps affecting associations, which, at its very appearance, are called out from the heart in which they were slumbering.

It is impossible to imagine a happier life than that of the cosherer. She has evidently no trouble, no care, no children, nor any of the various claims of life, to disturb or encumber her. Wherever she goes she is made, and finds herself, perfectly at home. The whole business of her life is carrying about intelligence, making and projecting matches, singing old songs, and telling old stories, which she frequently does with a feeling and unction not often to be met with. She will sing you the different sets and variations of the old airs, repeat the history and traditions of old families, recite *ranns*, interpret dreams, give the origin of old local customs, and tell a ghost story in a style that would make your hair stand on end. She is a bit of a doctress, too—an extensive herbalist, and

is very skilful and lucky among children. In short, she is a perfect Gentleman's Magazine in her way—a regular repertory of traditionary lore, a collector and distributor of social antiquities, dealing in everything that is time-worn or old, and handling it with such a quiet and antique air, that one would imagine her life to be a life not of years but of centuries, and that she had passed the greater portion of it, long as it was, in “wandering by the shores of old romance.”

Such a woman, the reader will at once perceive, is a formidable competitor for popular confidence with the midwife. Indeed there is but one consideration alone upon which we would be inclined to admit that the latter has any advantage over her—and it is, that she *is the midwife*; a word which is a tower of strength to her, not only against all professional opponents, but against such analogous characters as would intrude even upon any of her subordinate or collateral offices. As match-makers, it is extremely difficult to decide between her and the cosherer; so much so, indeed, that we are disposed to leave the claim for priority undetermined. In this respect, each pulls in the same harness; and as they are so well matched, we will allow them to jog on side by side, drawing the youngsters of the neighbouring villages slowly but surely towards the land of matrimony.

In humble country life, as in high life, we find in nature the same principles and motives of action. Let not the speculating mother of rank, nor the husband-hunting dowager, imagine for a moment that the plans, stratagems, lures, and trap-falls, with which they endeavour to secure some wealthy fool for their daughter, are not known and practised—ay, and with as much subtlety and circumvention too—by the very humblest of their own sex. In these matters they have not one whit of superiority over the lowest, sharpest, and most fraudulent gossip of a country village, where the arts of women are almost as sagaciously practised, and the small scandal as ably detailed, as in the highest circles of *fashion*.

The third great master of the art of match-making is the *Senachie*, who is nothing more or less than the counterpart of the cosherer; for as the cosher is never of the male sex, so the senachie is never female. With respect to their habits and mode of life, the only difference between them is, that the cosherer is never idle, so the senachie never is; and the latter is a far superior authority in old law, prophecy and genealogy. As a match-maker, however, the senachie comes infinitely short of the cosherer; for the truth is, that this branch of the art falls naturally within the manœuvring and intriguing spirit of a woman.

Our readers are not to understand that in the person of the fiddler or dancing-master there exists a tinct character openly known by the appellation of match-maker. No such thing. On the contrary, the negotiations they undertake are all performed in the most secret and false colours. The business, in fact, is close and secret, and always carried on with the profoundest mystery, veiled by the sanction of some other ostensible occupation.

One of the best specimens of the kind we ever saw was old Mary Murray. Mary was a tidy creature of middle size, who always went dressed in a short brown cloak, much faded, a striped red and blue dress, and a heather-coloured gown of the same fabric. When walking, which she did with the aid of a light hazel staff hooked at the top, she generally kept the hood of the cloak over her head, which gave to her whole figure a picturesque effect; and when she threw it back, one could not help admiring well her small but symmetrical features agreeably contrasted with the dowd cap of white linen, with a plain border, which she wore. A pair of blue stocking shoes, sharp-pointed shoes, high in the heels, completed her dress. Her features were good-natured and pleasant, but there lay over the whole countenance an expression of quickness and sagacity, contracted not by an habitual exercise of penetration and calculation.

spection. At the time I saw her she was very old, and I believe had the reputation of being the last in that part of the country who was known to go about from house to house spinning on the distaff, an instrument which has now passed away, being more conveniently replaced by the spinning-wheel.

The manner and style of Mary's visits were different from those of any other who could come to a farmer's house, or even to an humble cottage, for to the inmates of both were her services equally rendered. Let us suppose, for instance, the whole female part of a farmer's family assembled on a summer evening about five o'clock, each engaged in some domestic employment: in runs a lad who has been sporting about, breathlessly exclaiming, whilst his eyes are lit up with delight, "Mother! mother! here's Mary Murray coming down the boreen!" "Get out, avick; no, she's not." "Bad cess to me but she is; that I may never stir if she isn't! Now!" The whole family are instantly at the door to see if it be she, with the exception of the prettiest of them all, Kitty, who sits at her wheel and immediately begins to croon over an old Irish air, which is sadly out of tune; and well do we know, notwithstanding the mellow tones of that sweet voice, why it is so, and also why that youthful cheek, in which health and beauty meet, is now the colour of crimson.

"*Oh, Vara, acushla, cead millia failte ghud!* (Mary, darlin', a hundred thousand welcomes to you!) Och, musha, what kep' you away so long, Mary? Sure you won't lave us this month o' Sundays, Mary?" are only a few of the cordial expressions of hospitality and kindness with which she is received. But Kitty, whose cheek but a moment ago was carmine, why is it now pale as the lily?

"An' what news, Mary," asks one of her sisters; "sure you'll tell us every thing; won't you?"

"Troth, avillish, *I have no bad news*, any how—an' as to tellin' you *all*—Biddy, *thig dumh*, let me alone. No, *I have no bad news*, God be praised, but good news."

Kitty's cheek is again crimson, and her lips, and red as cherries, expand with the sweet soft air of her country, exhibiting a set of teeth for which many a countess would barter thousands, and give out a breath more delicious than the fragrance of a summer meadow. Oh, no wonder, indeed, that the kind heart of Mary contains in its recesses a message to her as tender as ever was transmitted from mother to woman!

"An', Kitty, acushla, where's the welcome to you, that's my favourite? Now don't be jealous of the childre; sure you all know she is, an' ever an' all was."

"If it's not upon my lips, it's in my heart, Mary, an' from that heart you're welcome!"

She rises up and kisses Mary, who gives her a glance of meaning, accompanied by the slightest imaginable smile, and a gentle but significant pressure of the hand, which thrills to her heart and diffuses a sense of ecstasy through her whole spirit. Not now remains but the opportunity, which is equally sought for by Mary and her, to hear without interruption the purport of her lover's communication, and this we leave to lovers to imagine.

In Ireland, however odd it may seem, there is among the very poorest classes some of the hardest and most penurious bargains in match-making ever were heard of or known. Now, strangers might imagine that all this close higgling proceeds from a spirit naturally near and sordid, but it is not so. The real secret of it lies in the poverty and necessity of the parties, and chiefly in the bitter experience of their parents, who, having come together in a state of destitution, are anxious each as much at the expense of the other as possible, to prevent their children from experiencing the same privation and misfortune which they themselves felt. Many a time have matches been suspended, or altogether broken off, because one party refused to give his son "*a slip of pig*," or another his daughter "*a pair of blank*

and it was no unusual thing for a match-maker to say, "Never mind; I have it all settled *but the slip*." One might naturally wonder why those who are so shrewd and provident upon this subject do not strive to prevent early marriages where the poverty is so great. So unquestionably they ought, but it is a settled usage of the country, and one, too, which Irishmen have never been in the habit of considering as an evil. We have no doubt that if they once began to reason upon it as such, they would be very strongly disposed to check a custom which has been the means of involving themselves and their unhappy offspring in misery, penury, and not unfrequently in guilt itself.

Mary, like many others in this world who are not conscious of the same failing, smelt strongly of the shop; in other words her conversation had a strong matrimonial tendency. No two beings ever lived so decidedly antithetical to each other in this point of view as the match-maker and the *Keener*. Mention the name of an individual or a family to the keener, and the medium through which her memory passes back to them is that of her professed employment—a mourner at wakes and funerals.

"Don't you know young Kelly of Tamlaght?"

"I do, avick," replies the keener, "and what about him?"

"Why he was married to-day mornin' to ould Jack M'Cluskey's daughter."

"Well, God grant them luck an' happiness, poor things! I do indeed remimber his father's wake an' funeral well—ould Risthard Kelly of Tamlaght—a dacent corpse he made for his years, an' well he looked. But indeed I *knew*n by the colour that sted in his cheeks, and the limbs remaining soople for the twenty-four hours after his departure, that some of the family 'ud follow him afore the year was out; * an' so she did. The youngest daughter, poor thing, by raison of a could she got, over-heatin' herself at a

* Such is the superstition,

dance, was stretched beside him that very day was eleven months ; and God knows it was from the heart my grief came for *her*—to see the poor handsome colleen laid low so soon. But when a gallopin' consumption sets in, avourneen, sure we all know what's to happen. In Crockaniska churchyard they sleep—the Lord make both their beds in heaven this day." The very reverse of this, but at the same time as inveterately professional, was Mary Murray.

"God save you, Mary."

"God save you kindly, avick. Eh!—let me look at you. Aren't you red Billy M'Guirk's son from Ballagh?"

"I am, Mary. An', Mary, how is yourself an' the world gettin' an'?"

"Can't complain, dear, in such times. How are yez all at home, alanna?" "Faix, middlin' well, Mary, thank God an' you—You heard of my grand uncle's death, big Ned M'Coul?"

"I did, avick, God rest him. Sure it's well I remember his weddin', poor man, by the same atoken that I know one that helped him on wid it a thrife. He was married in a blue coat and buckskins, an' wore a scarlet waistcoat that you'd see three miles off. Oh, well I remember it. An' whin he was settin' out that mornin' to the priest's house, 'Ned,' says I, an' I fwhishspered him, 'dhrop a button on the right knee afore you get the word said.' '*Thighum*,' said he, wid a smile, an' he slipped ten thirteens into my hand as he spoke. 'I'll do it,' said he, 'and thin a fig for the fairies!'—because you see if there's a button of the right knee left unbuttoned, the fairies—this day's Friday, God stand betune us and harm!—can do neither hurt nor harm to sowl or body, an' sure that's a great blessin', avick. He left two fine slips o' girls behind him."

"He did so—as good-lookin' girls as there's in the parish."

"Faix, an' kind mother for them, avick. She'll be marryin' agin, I'm judgin', she bein' sich a fresh good-lookin' woman."

“Why, it's very likely, Mary.”

“Troth its natural, achora. What can a lone woman do wid such a large farm upon her hands, widout having some one to manage it for her, an' prevint her from bein' imposed on? But, indeed, the first thing she ought to do is to marry off her two girls widout loss of time, in regard that it's hard to say how a stepfather an' thim might agree; and I've often known the mother herself, when she had a fresh family comin' an' her, to be as unnatural to her fatherless childre as if she was a stranger to thim, and that the same blood didn't run in their veins. Not saying that Mary M'Coul will or would act that way by her own; for, indeed, she's come of a kind ould stock, an' ought to have a good heart. Tell her, avick, when you see her, that I'll spind a day or two wid her—let me see—the day after to-morrow will be Palm Sunday—why, about the Aisther holidays.”

“Indeed I will, Mary, with great pleasure.”

“An' fwishsper, dear, jist tell her that I've a thing to say to her—that I had a long dish o' discourse about her wid a *friend o' mine*. You won't forget, now?”

“Oh, the dickens a forget!”

“Thank you, dear: God mark you to grace, avourneen! When you're a little ouldher, maybe I'll be a friend to you yet.”

This last intimation was given with a kind of mysterious benevolence, very visible in the complacent shrewdness of her face, and with a twinkle in the eye, full of grave humour and considerable self-importance, leaving the mind of the person she spoke to in such an agreeable uncertainty as rendered it a matter of great difficulty to determine whether she was serious or only in jest, but, at all events, throwing the onus of inquiry upon him.

The case and tact with which Mary could involve two young persons of opposite sexes in a mutual attachment, were very remarkable. In truth, she was a kind of *matrimonial incendiary*, who went through

the country holding her torch now to this light again to that—first to one and then to another—she had the parish more or less in a flame. As we consider the combustible materials of which an Irish heart is composed, it is no wonder in the labour of taking the census in Ireland at such a rapid rate, during the time that elapsed between the periods of its being made out. I for instance, met a young woman of her acquaintance accidentally—and it was wonderful to think how rarely these accidental meetings took place—she addressed her probably somewhat as follows:—

“Arra, Biddy Sullivan, how are you, a-cold?”
 “Faix, bravely, thank you, Mary. How are you?”

“Indeed, thin’ sorra a bit o’ the health we have plain of, Bhried, barrin’ whin this pain in my head comes upon us. The last time I seen you Biddy, she was complainin’ of a *weid*.* I hope she’ll be betther, poor woman?”

“Hut! bad scan to the thing ails her! She can’t light a foot as e’re a one of us, an’ can’t dance on her mornin’ brush’ as well as ever she could.”

“Throth, an’ I’m proud to hear it. O’ the day of ‘Jackson’s mornin’ brush!’ and it was she that did it. Sure I remimber her wedding-day lil’ day. Ay, far an’ near her fame wint as a daisy. The clanest-made girl that ever came from this parish. Like yestherday do I remimber it, an’ how that she showed herself an’ the ladies from the Big House came to see herself an’ your father, the bride and all. An’ it wasn’t on every hill head you’d get such a sight—dancin’ the same ‘Jackson’s mornin’ brush’ it was far and near her fame wint for dance. An’ is there no news wid you, Bhried, at all?”

“The sorra word, Mary; where ’ud I go to get it? Sure it’s yourself, that’s always on the fut, till you have the news for *us*, woman alive.”

* A feverish cold.

"An' maybe I have, too. I was spakin' to a friend o' mine about you the other day."

"A friend o' yours, Mary! Why, what friend could it be?"

"A friend o' mine—ay, an' of yours, too. Maybe you have more friends than you think, Biddy—and kind ones, too, as far as wishin' you well goes, 't any rate. Ay have you faix, an' friends that e're a girl in the parish might be proud to hear named in the one day wid her. Awouh!"

"Bedad we're in luck, thin, for that's more than I knew of. An' who may these great friends of ours be, Mary?"

"Awouh! Faix, as dacent a boy as ever broke bread the same boy is, 'and,' says he, 'if I had goold in bushelfuls, I'd think it too little for that girl;' but, poor lad, he's not aisy or happy in his mind in regard o' that. 'I'm afeard,' says he, 'that she'd put scorn upon me, an' not think me her aquals. An' no more I am,' says he, again, 'for where, afther all, would you get the likes of Biddy Sullivan?' Poor boy! throth my heart aches for him!"

"Well, can't you fall in love wid him yourself, Mary, whoever he is?"

"Indeed, an' if I was at your age, it would be no shame to me to do so; but, to tell you the truth, the sorra often ever the likes of Paul Heffernan came acress me."

"Paul Heffernan! Why, Mary," replied Biddy, smiling, with the assumed lightness of indifference, "is that your beauty? If it is, why, keep him, an' make much of him."

"Oh, wurrah! the differ there is between the hearts an' tongues of some people—one from another—an' the way they spaik behind others' backs! Well, well, I'm sure that wasn't the way he spoke of you, Biddy; an' God forgive you for runnin' down the poor boy as your doin'. Troggs! I believe you're the only girl would do it."

"Who, me! I'm not runnin' him down. I'm neither

runnin' him up nor down. I have neither good nor bad to say about him—the boy's a black stranger to me, barrin' to know his face."

"Faix, an' he's in consate wid you these three months past, an' intinds to be at the dance on Friday next, in Jack Gormly's new house. Now, good-bye, alanna; keep your own counsel till the time comes, an' mind what I said to you. It's not behind every ditch the likes of Paul Heffernan grows. *Bannaght lath!* My blessin' be wid you!"

Thus would Mary depart just at the critical moment, for well she knew that by husbanding her information and leaving the heart something to find out, she took the most effectual steps to excite and sustain that kind of interest which is apt ultimately to ripen, even from its own agitation, into the attachment she is anxious to promote.

The next day, by a meeting similarly accidental, she comes in contact with Paul Heffernan, who, honest lad, had never probably bestowed a thought upon Biddy Sullivan in his life.

"*Morrow ghud*, Paul!—how is your father's son, ahager?"

"*Morrow ghutch*a, Mary!—my father's son wants nothin' but a good wife, Mary."

"An' it's not every set day or bonfire night that a good wife is to be had, Paul—that is, a *good* one, as you say; for, throth, there's many o' them in the market, sich as they are. I was talkin' about you to a friend of mine the other day—an', trogs, I'm afeard you're not worth all the abuse we gave you."

"More power to you, Mary! I'm obliged to you. But who is the friend in the manetime?"

"Poor girl! Throth, when your name slipped out an her, the point of a rush would take a drop of blood out o' her cheek, the way she crimsoned up. 'An', Mary,' says she, 'if ever I know you to breathe it to man or mortual, my lips I'll never open to you to my dyin' day.' Trogs, whin I looked at her, an' the tears *standin'* in her purty black eyes, I thought I didn't

see a betther favoured girl, for both face and figure, this many a day, than the same Biddy Sullivan."

"Biddy Sullivan! Is that long Jack's daughter, of Cargah?"

"The same. But, Paul, avick, if a syllable o' what I tould you——"

"Hut, Mary! honour bright! Do you think me a *stag*, that I'd go and inform on you."

"Fwhishsper, Paul; she'll be at the dance on Friday next in Jack Gormly's new house. So *bannaght thath*, an' think o' what I betrayed to you."

Thus did Mary very quietly and sagaciously bind two young hearts together, who probably might otherwise have never for a moment even thought of each other. Of course when Paul and Biddy met at the dance on the following Friday, the one was the object of the closest attention to the other; and each being prepared to witness strong proofs of attachment from the opposite party, every thing fell out exactly according to their expectations.

Sometimes it happens that a booby of a fellow, during his calf love, will employ a male friend to plead his suit with a pretty girl, who, if the principal party had spunk might be very willing to marry him. To the credit of our fair countrywomen, however, be it said, that in scarcely one instance out of twenty does it happen, or has it ever happened, that any of them ever fails to punish the faint heart by bestowing the fair lady upon what is called the blackfoot or spokesman whom he selects to make love for him. In such a case it is very naturally supposed that the latter will speak two words for himself and one for his friend, and, indeed, the result bears out the supposition. Now, nothing on earth gratifies the heart of the established match-maker so much as to hear of such a disaster befalling a spoony. She exults over his misfortune for months, and publishes his shame to the uttermost bounds of her own little world, branding him as "a poor pitiful crature, who had not the *courage to speak up for himself, or, to employ them*

that could." In fact, she entertains much feeling against him that a regular physician towards some weak-minded patient, who p knavish ignorance of a quack to the skill ar of an able and educated medical practitioner.

Characters like Mary are fast disappearing land ; and indeed in a country where the life were generally inadequate to the war population, they were calculated, however w heart may look back upon the memory of vices, to do more harm than good, by induc folks to enter into early and improvident . They certainly sprang up from a state of s thoroughly formed by a proper education : ledge—where the language of a people, to many extensive districts in such a state of as in the interchange of affection to render preter absolutely necessary. We have our nessed marriages where the husband and v the one English and the other Irish, each l with difficulty to understand the other. I cases Mary was invaluable. She spoke English fluently, and indeed was acquaint every thing in the slightest or most remo necessary to the conduct of a love affair, fro glance up until the priest had pronounced words—or, to speak more correctly, until "t ing of the stocking."

Mary was invariably placed upon the *hot* the seat of comfort and honour at a farmer and there she sat neat and tidy, detailing all of the parish, telling them how such a mar one unbroken honeymoon—a sure proof, by that she herself had a hand in it—and a another one did not turn out well, and sh "there was always a bad dhrop in the H but, my dear, the girl herself was *for* him ; made her own bed she must lie in it, po Any way, thanks be to goodness I had noth *wid it !*"

Mary was to be found in every fair and market, and always at a particular place at a certain hour of the day, where the parties engaged in a courtship were sure to meet her on these occasions. She took a chirping glass, but never so as to become unsteady. Great deference was paid to every thing she said ; and if this was not conceded to her, she extorted it with a high hand. Nobody living could drink a health with half the comic significance that Mary threw into her eye when saying, " Well, young couple, here's everything as you wish it ! "

Mary's motions from place to place were usually very slow, and for the best reason in the world, because she was frequently interrupted. For instance, if she met a young man on her way, ten to one but he stood and held a long and earnest conversation with her ; and that it was both important and confidential, might easily be gathered from the fact that whenever a stranger passed, it was either suspended altogether, or carried on in so low a tone as to be inaudible. This held equally good with the girls. Many a time have I seen them retracing their steps, and probably walking back a mile or two, all the time engaged in discussing some topic evidently of more than ordinary interest to themselves. And when they shook hands and bade each other good bye, heavens ! at what a pace did the latter scamper homewards across fields and ditches, in order to make up for the time she had lost !

Nobody ever saw Mary receive a penny of money, and yet when she took a fancy, it was beyond any doubt that she has often been known to assist young folks in their early struggles ; but in no instance was the slightest aid ever afforded to anyone whose union she had not herself been instrumental in bringing about. As to the *when* and the *how* she got this money, and the great quantity of female apparel which she was known to possess, we think we see our readers smile at the simplicity of those who may not be able to guess the several sources from whence she obtained it.

One other fact we must mention before this sketch of her character. There were houses—we will not, for we dare not, say *how* into which Mary was never seen to enter. That, ever, was not her fault. Every one knew that she did, she did always for the best ; and small bits of execration were occasionally levelled at her, it was not more than the parties levelled at other. All marriages cannot be happy ; and it was a creditable proof of Mary Murray's that so few of those effected through her intertality were unfortunate.

Poor Mary ! match-making was the great of your simple but not absolutely harmless life are long since, we trust, gone to the hay where there are neither marryings nor marriages, but where you will have a long from your old habits and tendencies. We more reasons than either one or two, to thin faded crimson cloak, peaked shoes, hazel s grey eye, and nose and chin that were s character. As you used to say yourself, *lath* !—my blessing be with you !

BOB PENTLAND ;

OR THE GAUGER OUTWITTED.

THAT the Irish are a ready-witted people, is a fact to the truth of which testimony has been amply borne both by their friends and enemies. Many causes might be brought forward to account for this questionable gift, if it were our intention to be philosophical ; but as the matter has been so generally conceded, it would be but a waste of logic to prove to the world that which the world cares not about, beyond the mere fact that it is so. On this or any other topic one illustration is worth twenty arguments, and, accordingly, instead of broaching a theory we shall relate a story.

Behind the hill or rather mountain of Altnaveenan lies one of those deep and almost precipitous valleys, on which the practised eye of an illicit distiller would dwell with delight, as a topography not likely to be invaded by the unhallowed feet of the gauger and his red-coats. In point of fact, the spot we speak of was from its peculiarly isolated situation nearly invisible, unless to such as came very close to it. Being so completely hemmed in and concealed by the round and angular projections of the mountain hills, you could never dream of its existence at all, until you came upon the very verge of the little precipitous gorge which led into it. This advantage of position was not, however, its only one. It is true indeed that the moment you had entered it, all possibility of its being applied to the purposes of distillation at once vanished, and you consequently could not help exclaiming,

"what a pity that so safe and beautiful a nook not have a single spot on which to erect a still, or rather on which to raise a sufficient stair to water to the elevation necessary for the process of distilling." If a gauger actually came to the chasm, and cast his scrutinizing eye over it, he immediately perceive that the erection of a still in such a place was a piece of folly not to be found in the plans of those who have recourse to such practices.

This absence, however, of the requisite convenience was only apparent, not real. To the right, a hundred yards above the entrance to it, ran a series of rocks, some fifty feet high, or so. Along the crevices, near the ground, grew thick masses of long heath, which covered the entrance to a cave about as large and as high as an ordinary house. Through a series of small fissures in the rocks, which formed its roof, descended a stream of water, precisely in body and volume such as was actually required by the distiller ; but, unless you were looking up this mass of heath, no human being would ever have a moment imagine that there existed any such entrance, or so unexpected and easy an entrance to the cave. There was a private still-house made by the nature herself, such as no art or ingenuity could equal.

Now it so happened that about the period of the war, there lived in our parish two individuals who were rivals to each other in their pursuits of life, and who questioned whether throughout all the intricate and mysterious paths of nature we could find any two animals more destructive of each other than the two we were talking of, wit, Bob Pentland, the gauger, and little Steen, the illicit distiller. Pentland was a stout, stanch, well-trained fellow, of about fifty years of age, more, steady and sure, and with all the characteristics of the high-bred gauger about him. He was a tallish man, thin but lathy, with a hooked nose, and *could scent* the thread of a distiller with the

of a slew-hound ; his dark eye was deep-set, circumspect, and roguish in its expression, and his shaggy brow seemed always to be engaged in calculating whereabouts his inveterate foe, little George Steen, that eternally blinked him, when almost in his very fangs, might then be distilling. To be brief, Pentland was proverbial for his sagacity and adroitness in detecting distillers, and little George was equally proverbial for having always baffled him, and that, too, sometimes under circumstances where escape seemed hopeless.

The incidents which we are about to detail occurred at that period of time when the collective wisdom of our legislators thought it advisable to impose a fine upon the whole townland in which the Still, Head, and Worm, might be found ; thus opening a door for knavery and fraud, and, as it proved in most cases, rendering the innocent as liable to suffer for an offence they never contemplated, as the guilty who planned and perpetrated it. The consequence of such a law was, that still-houses were always certain to be erected either at the very verge of the neighbouring districts, or as near them as the circumstances of convenience and situation would permit. The moment of course that the hue-and-cry of the gauger and his myrmidons was heard upon the wind, the whole apparatus was immediately heaved over the *mering* to the next townland, from which the fine imposed by parliament was necessarily raised, whilst the crafty and offending district actually escaped. The state of society generated by such a blundering and barbarous statute as this, was dreadful. In the course of a short time, reprisals, law-suits, battles, murders, and massacres, multiplied to such an extent throughout the whole country, that the sapient senators who occasioned such commotion were compelled to repeal their own act as soon as they found how it worked. Necessity, together with being the mother of invention, is also the cause of many an accidental discovery. *Pentland* had been so frequently defeated by little

George, that he vowed never to rest until he had secured him; and George, on the other hand, frequently told him—for they were otherwise on the best terms—that he defied him, or, as he himself more quaintly expressed it, “that he defied the devil, the world, and Bob Pentland.” The latter, however, was a very sore thorn in his side, and drove him from place to place, and from one haunt to another, until he began to despair of being able any longer to outwit him, or to find within the parish any spot at all suitable for distillation with which Pentland was not acquainted. In this state stood matters between them, when George fortunately discovered at the hip of Altnaveenan hill the natural grotto we have just sketched so briefly. Now, George was a man, as we have already hinted, of great fertility of resources; but there existed in the same parish another distiller who outstripped him in that far-sighted cunning which is so necessary in misleading or circumventing such a sharp-scented old hound as Pentland. This was little Mickey M’Quade, a short-necked squat little fellow with bow legs, who might be said rather to creep in his motion than to walk. George and Mickey were intimate friends, independently of their joint antipathy against the gauger, and, truth to tell, much of the mortification and many of the defeats which Pentland experienced at George’s hands, were, *sub rosa*, to be attributed to Mickey. George was a distiller from none of the motives which generally actuate others of that class. He was in truth an analytic philosopher—a natural chemist never out of some new experiment—and we have reason to think might have been the Kane, or Faraday, or Dalton, of his day, had he only received a scientific education. Not so honest Mickey, who never troubled his head about an experiment, but only thought of making a good running, and defeating the gauger. The first thing of course that George did was to consult Mickey, and both accordingly took a walk up to the scene of *their future operations*. On examining it, and fully

perceiving its advantages, it might well be said that the look of exultation and triumph which passed between them was not unworthy of their respective characters.

"This will do," said George. "Eh—don't you think we'll put our finger in Pentland's eye yet?" Mickey spat sagaciously over his beard, and, after a second glance, gave one grave grin which spoke volumes.

"It'll do," said he; "but there's one point to be got over that maybe you didn't think of; an' you know that half a blink, half a point, is enough for Pentland."

"What is it?"

"What do you intend to do with the smoke when the fire's lit? There'll be no keepin' *that* down. Let Pentland see but as much smoke risin' as would come out of an ould woman's dudeen, an' he'd have us."

George started, and it was clear by the vexation and disappointment which were visible on his brow that unless this untoward circumstance could be managed, their whole plan was deranged, and the cave of no value.

"What's to be done?" he inquired of his cooler companion. "If we can't get over this, we may bid good bye to it."

"Never mind," said Mickey; "I'll manage it, and *do* Pentland still." "Ay, but how?"

"It's no matter. Let us not lose a minute in settin' to work. Lave the other thing to me; an' if I don't account for the smoke without discoverin' the entrance to the still, I'll give you lave to crop the ears of my head."

George knew the cool but steady self-confidence for which Mickey was remarkable, and, accordingly, without any further interrogatory, they both proceeded to follow up their plan of operations.

In those times when distillation might be truly considered as almost universal, it was customary for farmers to build their out-houses with secret chambers and other requisite partitions necessary for carrying it on. Several of them had private stores built between false walls, the entrance to which was only known to a

few, and many of them had what were called *Malt-steeps* sunk in hidden recesses and hollow gables, for the purpose of steeping the barley, and afterwards of turning and airing it, until it was sufficiently hard to be kiln-dried and ground. From the mill it was usually conveyed to the still-house upon what were termed *Slipes*, a kind of car that was made without wheels, in order the more easily to pass through morasses and bogs which no wheeled vehicle could encounter.

In the course of a month or so, George and Mickey, aided by their friends, had all the apparatus of keeve, hogshead, &c., together with Still, Head, and Worm, set up and in full work.

"And now Mickey," inquired his companion, "how will you manage about the smoke? for you know that the two worst informers against a private distiller, barrin' a *stag*, is a smoke by day an' a fire by night."

"I know that," replied Mickey; "an' a rousin' smoke we'll have, for fraid a little puff wouldn't do us. Come now, an' I'll show you."

They both ascended to the top, where Mickey had closed all the open fissures of the roof with the exception of that which was directly over the fire of the still. This was at best not more than six inches in breadth, and about twelve long. Over it he placed a piece of strong plate-iron perforated with holes, and on this he had a fire of turf, beside which sat a little boy who acted as a vidette. The thing was simple but effective. Clamps of turf were at every side of them, and the boy was instructed, if the gauger, whom he well knew, ever appeared, to heap on fresh fuel, so as to increase the smoke in such a manner as to induce him to suppose that *all* he saw of it proceeded merely from the fire before him. In fact, the smoke from the cave below was so completely identified with and lost in that which was emitted from the fire above, that no human being could penetrate the mystery, if not made previously acquainted with it. *The writer of this saw it during the hottest process of*

Distillation, and failed to make the discovery, although told that the still-house was within a circle of three hundred yards, the point he stood on being considered the centre. On more than one occasion has he absconded from home, and spent a whole night in the place, seized with that indescribable fascination which such a scene holds forth to youngsters, as well as from his irrepressible anxiety to hear the old stories and legends with the recital of which they generally pass the night.

In this way, well provided against the gauger—indeed much better than our readers are yet aware of, as they shall understand by and bye—did George, Mickey, and their friends, proceed for the greater part of a winter without a single visit from Pentland. Several successful runnings had come off, which had, of course, turned out highly profitable, and they were just now preparing to commence their last, not only for the season, but the last they should ever work together, as George was making preparations to go early in the spring to America. Even this running was going on to their satisfaction, and the singlings had been thrown again into the still, from the worm of which projected the strong medicinal *first-shot* as the doubling commenced—this last term meaning the spirit in its pure and finished state. On this occasion the two worthies were more than ordinarily anxious, and certainly doubled their usual precautions against a surprise, for they knew that Pentland's visits resembled the pounces of a hawk or the springs of a tiger more than anything else to which they could compare them. In this they were not disappointed. When the doubling was about half finished, he made his appearance, attended by a strong party of reluctant soldiers—for, indeed, it is due to the military to state that they never took delight in harassing the country people at the command of a keg-hunter, as they generally nicknamed the gauger. It had been arranged that the vidette at the iron plate should whistle a particular tune the moment that the gauger,

or a red-coat, or, in fact, any person whom he did not know, should appear. Accordingly, about eight o'clock in the morning they heard the little fellow in his highest key whistling up that well-known and very significant old Irish air called "Go to the devil an' shake yourself"—which, in this case, was applied to the gauger in anything but an allegorical sense.

"Be the pins," which was George's usual oath—"be the pins, Mickey, it's over with us—Pentland here, for there's the sign."

Mickey paused for a moment and listened very gravely; then squirting out a tobacco spittle, "Tal it aisy," said he; "I have half a dozen fires about the hills, any one as like this as your right hand is your left. I didn't spare trouble, for I knew that we'd get over *this* day, we'd be out of his power."

"Well, my good lad," said Pentland, addressing the vidette, "what's this fire for?"

"What is it for, is it?"

"Yes; if you don't let me know instantly, I'll blow your brains out, and get you hanged and transported afterwards." This he said with a thundering voice, cocking a large horse pistol at the same time.

"Why, sir," said the boy, "it's watchin' a still am; but be the hole of my coat, if you tell upon it it's broilin' upon these coals I'll be soon."

"Where is the still, then? An' the still-house where is it?"

"Oh, begorra, as to where the still or still-house is, they wouldn't tell *me* that."

"Why, sirra, didn't you say this moment you were watching a still?"

"I meant, sir," replied the lad, with a face that spoke of pure idiocy, "that it was the gauger I was watchin', an' I was to whistle upon my fingers to the boy at that fire on the hill there above know that he was comin'."

"Who told you to do so?"

"Little George, sir, an' Mickey M'Quade."

"Ay, ay, right enough there, my lad—two of

most notorious schemers unhanged they are both. But now, like a good boy, tell me the truth, an' I'll give you the price of a pair of shoes. Do you know where the still or still-house is? Because if you do, an' won't tell me, here are the soldiers at hand to make a prisoner of you; an' if they do, all the world can't prevent you from being hanged, drawn, and quartered."

"Oh, bad cess may seize the morsel o' me knows that; but if you'll give me the money, sir, I'll tell you who can bring you to it, for he tould me yesther-day mornin' that he knew, an' offered to bring me there last night, if I'd steal him a bottle, tal he'd put whiskey in it."

"Well, my lad, who is this boy?"

"Do you know 'Harry Neil, or Mankind,'* sir?"

"I do, my good boy."

"Well, it's a son of his, sir: an' look, sir: do you see the smoke farthest up to the right, sir?"

"To the right? Yes."

"Well, 'tis there, sir, that Darby Neil is watchin'; and he *says* he knows."

"How long have you been watching here?"

"This is only the third day, sir, for *me*; but the rest of them boys above, has been here a good while."

"Have you seen nobody stirring about the hills since you came?"

"Only once, sir, yestherday, I seen two men, havin' an empty sack or two, runnin' across the hill there above."

At this moment the military came up, for he had himself run forward in advance of them, and he repeated the substance of his conversation with our friend the vidette. Upon examining the stolidity of his countenance, in which there certainly was a woful deficiency of meaning, they agreed among themselves that his appearance justified the truth of the story

* This was a nickname given to Harry, who was a cooper, and made the necessary vessels for distillers.

which he told the gauger, and upon being still further interrogated, they were confirmed that none so stupid lout like himself would entrust to his keeping any secret worth knowing. They now separated themselves into as many detached parties as there were fires burning on the hills about them, the gauger himself resolving to make for that which Darby had in his keeping, for he could not help think that the vidette's story was too natural to be false. They were just in the act of separating themselves to pursue their different routes, when the lad said,

"Look, sir ! look, sir ! bad scran be from us there's a still any way. Sure I often seen a still that's just like the one that Philip Hogan the cooper mended in George Steen's barn."

"Hollo, boys," exclaimed Pentland, "stoop ! they are coming this way, and don't see us : no matter, no ! they have discovered us now, and are coming towards Mossfield. By Jove this will be a bad trick if they succeed ; confound them, they are coming for Ballagh, which is my own property ; and they will be hanged but if we do not intercept them it is their own self who will have to pay the fine."

The pursuit instantly commenced with a speed and vigour equal to the ingenuity of this act of retaliation on the gauger. Pentland himself being long-versed in such much practice in this way, and being further stimulated by the prospective loss which he drew from made as beautiful a run of it as any man of his class could do. It was all in vain, however. He had not got far enough to see the Still, Head, and Tail, when he heaved across the march ditch into his own predicament and to reflect after seeing it that he was certain to have the double consolation of being made a scapegoat for life, and of paying heavily for the joke of his own pocket. In the mean time, he was obliged of course to seize the still, and report the capture, and as he himself farmed the townland in question the fine was levied to the last shilling, upon the *natural principle* that if he had been sufficiently

and vigilant, no man would have attempted to set up a still so convenient to his own residence and property.

This manœuvre of keeping in reserve an old or second set of apparatus, for the purpose of acting the lapwing and misleading the gauger, was afterwards often practised with success ; but the first discoverer of it was undoubtedly Mickey M'Quade, although the honour of the discovery is attributed to his friend George Steen. The matter, however, did not actually end here, for in a few days afterwards some malicious wag—in other words, George himself—had correct information sent to Pentland touching the locality of the cavern and the secret of its entrance. On this occasion the latter brought a larger military party than usual along with him, but it was only to make him feel that he stood in a position if possible still more ridiculous than the first. He found indeed the marks of recent distillation in the place, but nothing else. Every vessel and implement connected with the process had been removed, with the exception of one bottle of whiskey, to which was attached by a bit of twine the following friendly note :—

“MR. PENTLAND, SIR—Take this bottle home and drink your own health. You can't do less. It was distilled *under your nose*, the first day you came to look for us, and bottled for you while you were speaking to the little boy that made a hare of you. Being distilled then under your nose, let it be drunk in the same place, and don't forget while doing so to drink the health of
G. S.”

The incident went abroad like wildfire, and was known everywhere. Indeed for a long time it was the standing topic of the parish ; and so sharply was it felt by Pentland that he could never keep his temper if asked, “Mr. Pentland, when did you see little George Steen ?”—a question to which he was never known to give a civil reply.

THE FATE
OF
FRANK M'KENNA.

WE have met and conversed with the various classes that compose general society, and we feel ourselves bound to say that in no instance have we ever met any individual, no matter what his class or rank in life, who was really indifferent to the subject of dreams, fairies, and apparitions. They are topics that interest the imagination in all ; and the hoary head of age is inclined with as much interest to a ghost-story, as the young and eager ear of youth, wrought up by all the nimble and apprehensive powers of early fancy. It is true the belief in ghosts is fast disappearing, and that in fairies is already almost gone ; but with what new wonders they shall be replaced, it is difficult to say. The physical and natural we suppose will give us enough of the marvellous, without having recourse to the spiritual and supernatural. Steam and gas, if Science advance for another-half century at the same rate as she has done in the last, will give sufficient exercise to all our faculties for wondering. We know a man who travelled eighty miles to see whether or not it was a fact that light could be conveyed for miles in a pipe under ground ; and this man to our own knowledge possessed the organ of marvellousness to a surprising degree. It is singular, too, that his fear of ghosts was in proportion to this capacious propensity to wonder, as was his disposition when anug

chimney-corner to talk incessantly of such topics were calculated to excite it.

In our opinion, ghosts and fairies will be seen wherever they are much talked of, and a belief in their existence cultivated and nourished. So long as the powers of the imagination are kept warm and active by exercise, they will create for themselves such images as they are in the habit of conceiving or dwelling upon; and these, when the individual happens to be in the appropriate position, will, even by the mere force of association, engender the particular delusion which is predominant in the mind. As an illustration of this I shall mention two cases of apparitions which occurred in my native parish, one of which was that of a ghost, and the other of the fairies. To those who have read my "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," the first which I shall narrate may possess some interest, as being that upon which I founded the tale of the "Midnight Mass." The circumstances are simply these:—

There lived a man named M'Kenna at the hip of one of the mountainous hills which divide the county of Tyrone from that of Monaghan. This M'Kenna, who had two sons, one of whom was in the habit of tracing the lines of a Sunday, whenever there happened to be a fall of snow. His father it seems had frequently reprimanded with him upon what he considered to be a total neglect of Mass. The young man, however, though otherwise harmless and inoffensive, was in this matter quite insensible to paternal reproof, and continued to trace whenever the avocations of labour would allow him. It so happened that upon a Christmas morning, I think in the year 1814, there was a deep fall of snow, and young M'Kenna, instead of going to Mass, got down his cock-stick—which is a staff much thicker and heavier at one end than at the other—and prepared to set out on his favourite amusement. His father, seeing this, reproved him seriously, and insisted that he should attend prayers. His en-

thusiasm for the sport, however, was strong, his love of religion, and he refused to be guided by his father's advice. The old man during the conversation got warm; and on finding that the son not only scorned his authority, he knelt down and prayed that if the boy persisted in following his will, he might never return from the mountains less as a corpse. The imprecation, which was as harsh as it was impious and senseless, might have startled many a mind from a purpose that was at the least of it, at variance with religion and respect due to a father. It had no effect, however, upon the son, who is said to have replied that whether he ever returned or not, he was determined to go; and go accordingly he did. He was, however, alone, for it appears that three or four neighbouring young men accompanied him. Whether their sport was good or otherwise, is not to be known; neither am I able to say; but the story that towards the latter part of the day they were larger and darker haired than any they had ever seen, and that she kept dodging on before them by leading them to suppose that every succeeding cock-stick would bring her down. It was afterwards that she also led them into the mountains, and that although they tried to turn her course homewards, they could not succeed in doing so. As evening advanced, the company began to feel the folly of pursuing farther, and to perceive the danger of losing their way in the mountains should night or a snow-storm come upon them. They therefore proposed to give up the chase and return home; but M'Kenna would not hear of it. "If you wish to go home, you may," said he; "as for me, I'll never leave the hills until I have her with me." They begged and entreated him to desist and return, but all to no purpose. He appeared to be what the Scotch call *fey*—that is, to act as if he were moved by some impulse to death, and from the influence of which a

not withdraw himself. At length, on finding him invincibly obstinate, they left him pursuing the hare directly into the heart of the mountains, and returned to their respective homes.

In the meantime, one of the most terrible snow-storms ever remembered in that part of the country came on, and the consequence was, that the self-willed young man, who had equally trampled on the sanctions of religion and parental authority, was given over for lost. As soon as the tempest became still, the neighbours assembled in a body and proceeded to look for him. The snow, however, had fallen so heavily that not a single mark of a footstep could be seen. Nothing but one wide waste of white undulating hills met the eye wherever it turned, and of M'Kenna no trace whatever was visible or could be found. His father now remembering the unnatural character of his imprecation, was nearly distracted; for although the body had not yet been found, still by every one who witnessed the sudden rage of the storm and who knew the mountains, escape or survival was felt to be impossible. Every day for about a week large parties were out among the hill-ranges seeking him, but to no purpose. At length there came a thaw, and his body was found on a snow-wreath, lying in a supine posture within a circle which he had drawn around him with his cock-stick. His prayer-book lay opened upon his mouth, and his hat was pulled down so as to cover it and his face. It is unnecessary to say that the rumour of his death, and of the circumstances under which he left home, created a most extraordinary sensation in the country—a sensation that was the greater in proportion to the uncertainty occasioned by his not having been found either alive or dead. Some affirmed that he had crossed the mountains, and was seen in Monaghan; others, that he had been seen in Clones, in Emyvale, in Fivemiletown; but despite of all these agreeable reports, the melancholy truth was at length made clear by the appearance of the body as just stated.

Now, it so happened that the house near spot where he lay was inhabited by a man Daly, I think—but of the name I am not certain—who was a herd or care-taker to Dr. Port Bishop of Clogher. The situation of this house was the most lonely and desolate-looking that could be imagined. It was at least two miles distant from human habitation, being surrounded by one wide dreary waste of dark moor. By this house lay the route of those who had found the corpse, and in the door of it was borrowed for the purpose of conveying it home. Be this as it may, the family witnessed the melancholy procession as it passed through the mountains, and when the place and circumstances are all considered, we may admit that ignorant and superstitious people, whose minds upon ordinary occasions were strongly affected by such matters, it was a sight calculated to leave behind it a deep, if not a terrible impression. Time has proved that it did so.

An incident is said to have occurred at the funeral which I have alluded to in the "Midnight Mass," and which is certainly in fine keeping with the whole spirit of the whole melancholy event. When the procession had advanced to a place called Mullatunny, a large dark-coloured hare, which was instantly recognised, by those who had been out with him to the hills, as the identical one that led him to his fate, is said to have crossed the roads about twenty yards or so before the coffin. The story goes, that a man struck it on the side with a stone, and that blow, which would have killed any ordinary hare, not only did it no injury, but occasioned a sound to proceed from the body resembling the hollow one emitted by an empty barrel when struck.

In the meantime the interment took place, and the sensation began like every other to die away in the natural progress of time, when, behold, a report spread abroad like wildfire that, to use the language of the people, "Frank M'Kenna was appearing!" Seld

eed was the rumour of an apparition composed of materials so strongly calculated to win popular assent, to baffle rational investigation. As every man is a Hibbert, or a Nicolai, so will many, until such circumstances are made properly intelligible, continue to yield credence to testimony which would convince judgment on any other subject. The case in question furnished as fine a specimen of a true ghost-story, freed from any suspicion of imposture or deception, as could be submitted to a philosopher; and, notwithstanding the array of apparent facts connected with it, nothing in the world is simpler or of easier solution.

One night, about a fortnight after his funeral, the daughter of Daly, the herd, a girl about fourteen, while lying in bed saw what appeared to be the likeness of M'Kenna, who had been lost. She screamed out, and covering her head with the bed-clothes, told her father and mother that Frank M'Kenna was in the house. This alarming intelligence naturally produced great terror; still, Daly, who, notwithstanding his belief in such matters, possessed a good deal of moral courage, was cool enough to rise and examine the house, which consisted of only one apartment. This gave the daughter some courage, who, on finding that her father could not see him, ventured to look out, and she *then* could see nothing of him herself. She very soon fell asleep, and her father attributed what she saw to fear, or some accidental combination of shadows proceeding from the furniture, for it was a clear moon-light night. The light of the following day dispelled a great deal of their apprehensions, and comparatively little was thought of it until evening again advanced, when the fears of the daughter began to return. They appeared to be prophetic, for she said when night came that she knew he would appear again; and accordingly at the same hour he did so. This was repeated for several successive nights, until the girl, from the very hardihood of tex-

ror, began to become so far familiarised to the spectre as to venture to address it.

"In the name of God!" she asked, "what is troubling you, or why do you appear to me instead of to some of your own family or relations?"

The ghost's answer alone might settle the question involved in the authenticity of its appearance, being, as it was, an account of one of the most ludicrous missions that ever a spirit was despatched upon.

"I'm not allowed," said he, "to spake to any of my friends, for I parted wid them in anger; but I'm come to tell you that they are quarrelin' about my breeches—a new pair that I got made for Christmas day; an' as I was comin' up to thrace in the mountains, I thought the ould one 'ud do betther, an' of coorse I didn't put the new pair an me. My raison for appearin'," he added, "is, that you may tell my friends that none of them is to wear them—they must be given in charity."

This serious and solemn intimation from the ghost was duly communicated to the family, and it was found that the circumstances were exactly as it had represented them. This, of course, was considered as sufficient proof of the truth of its mission. Their conversations now became not only frequent, but quite friendly and familiar. The girl became a favourite with the spectre, and the spectre, on the other hand, soon lost all his terrors in her eyes. He told her that whilst his friends were bearing home his body, the handspikes or poles on which they carried him had cut his back, and *occasioned him great pain!* The cutting of the back also was known to be true, and strengthened, of course, the truth and authenticity of their dialogues. The whole neighbourhood was now in a commotion with this story of the apparition, and persons incited by curiosity began to visit the girl in order to satisfy themselves of the truth of what they had heard. Every thing, however, was corroborated, and the child herself, without any symptoms of anxiety or terror, artlessly related her conversations with the

spirit. Hitherto their interviews had been all nocturnal, but now that the ghost found his footing made good, he put a hardy face on, and ventured to appear by day-light. The girl also fell into states of syncope, and while the fits lasted, long conversations with him upon the subject of God, the blessed Virgin, and Heaven, took place between them. He was certainly an excellent moralist, and gave the best advice. Swearing, drunkenness, theft, and every evil propensity of our nature, were declaimed against with a degree of spectral eloquence quite surprising. Common fame had now a topic dear to her heart, and never was a ghost made more of by his best friends, than she made of him. The whole country was in a tumult, and I well remember the crowds which flocked to the lonely little cabin in the mountains, now the scene of matters so interesting and important. Not a single day passed in which I should think from ten to twenty, thirty, or fifty persons, were not present at these singular interviews. Nothing else was talked of, thought of, and, as I can well testify, dreamt of. I would myself have gone to Daly's were it not for a confounded misgiving I had, that perhaps the ghost might take such a fancy of appearing to *me*, as he had taken to cultivate an intimacy with the girl; and it so happens, that when I see the face of an individual nailed down in the coffin—chilling and gloomy operation!—I experience no particular wish to look upon it again.

Many persons might imagine that the herd's daughter was acting the part of an imposter, by first originating and then sustaining such a delusion. If any one, however, was an imposter, it was the ghost, and not the girl, as her ill health and wasted cheek might well testify. The appearance of M'Kenna continued to haunt her for months. The reader is aware that he was lost on Christmas day, or rather on the night of it, and I remember seeing her in the early part of the following summer, during which time she was still the victim of a diseased imagination. Every *thing* in fact that could be done for her was done.

They brought her to a priest named Donnelly, who lived down at Ballynasaggart, for the purpose of getting her cured, as he had the reputation of performing cures of that kind. They brought her also to the doctors, who also did what they could for her ; but all to no purpose. Her fits were longer and of more frequent occurrence ; her appetite left her ; and ere four months had elapsed, she herself looked as like a spectre as the ghost himself could do for the life of him.

Now, this was a pure case of spectral illusion, and precisely similar to that detailed so philosophically by Nicolai the German bookseller, and to others mentioned by Hibbert. The image of M'Kenna not only appeared to her in daylight at her own house, but subsequently followed her wherever she went ; and what proved this to have been the result of diseased organization, produced at first by a heated and excited imagination, was, that, as the story went, she could see him with her eyes shut. Whilst this state of mental and physical feeling lasted, she was a subject of the most intense curiosity. No matter where she went, whether to chapel, to fair, or to market, she was followed by crowds, every one feeling eager to get a glimpse of the girl who had actually seen, and what was more, spoken to a ghost—a live ghost.

Now, here was a young girl of an excitable temperament, and large imagination, leading an almost solitary life amidst scenery of a lonely and desolate character, who, happening to be strongly impressed with an image of horror—for surely such was the body of a dead man seen in association with such peculiarly frightful circumstances as filial disobedience and a father's curse were calculated to give it—cannot shake it off, but on the contrary becomes a victim to the disease which it generates. There is not an image which we see in a fever, or a face, whether of angel or devil, or an uncouth shape of any kind, that is not occasioned by cerebral excitement, or derangement of the nervous system, analogous to that under which Dady's daughter laboured. I saw her several times, and remem-

ber clearly that her pale face, dark eye, and very intellectual forehead, gave indications of such a temperament as under her circumstances would be apt to receive strong and fearful impressions from images calculated to excite terror, especially of the supernatural. It only now remains for me to mention the simple method of her cure, which was effected without either priest or doctor. It depended upon a word or two of advice given to her father by a very sensible man, who was in the habit of thinking on these matters somewhat above the superstitious absurdities of the people.

"If you wish your daughter to be cured," said he to her father, "leave the house you are now living in. Take her to some part of the country where she can have companions of her own class and state of life to mingle with; bring her away from the place altogether; for you may rest assured that so long as there are objects before her eyes to remind her of what happened, she will not mend on your hands."

The father, although he sat rent free, took this excellent advice, even at a sacrifice of some comfort; for nothing short of the temptation of easy circumstances could have induced any man to reside in so wild and remote a solitude. In the course of a few days he removed from it with his family, and came to reside amidst the cheerful aspect and enlivening intercourse of human life. The consequences were precisely as the man had told him. In the course of a few weeks the little girl began to find that the visits of the spectre were like those of angels, few and far between. She was sent to school, and what with the confidence derived from human society, and the substitution of new objects and images, she soon perfectly recovered, and ere long was thoroughly set free from the fearful creation of her own brain.

Now, there is scarcely one of the people in my native parish who does not believe that the spirit of this man came back to the world, and actually appeared to this little girl. The time, however, is fast

coming when these empty bugbears will altogether disappear, and we shall entertain more reverend and becoming notions of God, than to suppose such senseless pranks could be played by the soul of a departed being under his permission. We might as well assert, that the imaginary beings which surround the couch of the madman or hypochondriac have a real existence, as those that are conjured up by terror, weak nerves, or impure blood.

The spot where the body of M'Kenna was found is now marked by a little heap of stones, which has been collected since the melancholy event of his death. Every person who passes it throws a stone upon the heap; but why this old custom is practised, or what it means, I do not know, unless it be simply to mark the spot as a visible means of preserving the memory of the occurrence.

Daly's house, the scene of the supposed apparition, is now a shapeless ruin, which could scarcely be seen were it not for the green spot that once was a garden, and which now shines at a distance like an emerald, but with no agreeable or pleasing associations. It is a spot which no solitary school-boy will ever visit, nor indeed would the unflinching believer in the popular nonsense of ghosts wish to pass it without a companion. It is under any circumstances a gloomy and barren place, but when looked upon in connexion with what we have just recited, it is lonely, desolate, and awful.

THE RIVAL KEMBERS.

IN the preceding paper we have given an authentic account of what the country folks, and we ourselves at the time, looked upon as a genuine instance of apparition. It appeared to the simple-minded to be a clear and distinct case, exhibiting all those minute and subordinate details which, by an arrangement naturally happy, and without concert, go to the formation of truth. There was, however, but one drawback in the matter, and that was the ludicrous and inadequate nature of the moral motive ; for what unsteady and derogatory notions of Providence must we not entertain when we see the order and purpose of his divine will so completely degraded and travestied, by the fact of a human soul returning to this earth again, for the ridiculous object of settling the claim to a pair of breeches ?

When we see the succession to crowns and kingdoms, and the inheritance to large territorial property and great personal rank, all left so completely undecided that ruin and desolation have come upon nations and families in attempting their adjustment, and when we see a laughable dispute about a pair of breeches settled by a personal revelation from another life, we cannot help asking why the supernatural intimation was permitted in the one case, and not in the other, especially when their relative importance differed so essentially ? To follow up this question, however, by insisting upon a principle so absurd, would place Providence in a position so perfectly unreasonable and capricious, that we do not wish to

press the inference so far as admission of divine interference in such a manner would justify us in doing.

Having detailed the case of Daly's daughter, however, we take our leave of the girl and the ghost, and turn now to another case, which came under our own observation, in connexion with a man named Frank Martin and the fairies. Before commencing, however, we shall, by way of introduction, endeavour to give our readers a few short particulars as to fairies, their origin, character, and conduct. And as we happen to be on this subject, we cannot avoid regretting that we have not by us copies of two most valuable works upon it, from the pen of our learned and admirable countryman, Thomas Keightly. We allude to his *Fairy Mythology* and his *History of the Transmission of Popular Fictions*; two works which cannot be perused without delight at the happy manner in which so much learning and amusement, so much solid information, and all that is agreeable in extensive research, are inimitably combined.

With the etymology of the word *Fairy* we do not intend in a sketch like this to puzzle our readers. It is with the tradition connected with the *thing* we have to do, and not with a variety of learned speculations, which appear, after all, to be yet unsettled. The general opinion, at least in Ireland, is, that during the war of Lucifer in heaven, the angels were divided into three classes. The first class consisted of those faithful spirits who at once, and without hesitation, adhered to the standard of the Omnipotent; the next consisted of those who openly rebelled, and followed the great apostate, sharing eternal perdition along with him; the third and last consisted of those who, during the mighty clash and uproar of the contending hosts, stood timidly aloof, and refused to join either power. These, says the tradition, were hurled out of heaven, some upon earth, and some into the waters of the earth, where they are to remain, ignorant of their fate, until the day of judgment. They know their own
however, and it is said that nothing but their

hopes of salvation prevent them from at once annihilating the whole human race. Such is the broad basis of the general superstition ; but our traditional history and conception of the popular fairy falls far short of the historical dignity associated with its origin. The fairy of the people is a diminutive creature, generally dressed in green, irritable, capricious, and quite unsteady in all its principles and dealings with mankind. Sometimes it exhibits singular proofs of ingenuity, but, on the contrary, is frequently overreached by mere mortal capacity. It is impossible to say, in dealing with it, whether its conduct will be found benevolent or otherwise, for it often has happened that its threats of injury have ended in kindness, and its promises of protection terminated in malice and treachery. What is very remarkable, too, is, that it by no means appears to be a mere spirit, but a being with passions, appetites, and other natural wants like ourselves. Indeed, the society or community of fairies appears to be less self-dependent than ours, inasmuch as there are several offices among them which they not only cannot perform, but which render it necessary that we should be stolen and domiciled with them, for the express purpose of performing for them. Like us they are married and given in marriage, and rear families ; but whether their offspring are subject to death, is a matter not exactly the clearest. Some traditions affirm that they are, and others that they are as immortal as the angels, although possessing material bodies analogous to our own. The fairy, in fact, is supposed to be a singular mixture of good and evil, not very moral in its actions or objects, often very thievish, and sometimes benevolent, when kindness is least expected from it. It is generally supposed by the people that this singular class of fictitious creatures enjoy, as a kind of right, the richest and best of all the fruits of the earth, and that the top grain of wheat, oats, &c., and the ripest apple, pear, &c., all belong to them, and are taken as their own exclusive property.

They have also other acknowledged rights which they never suffer to be violated with impunity. For instance, wherever a meal is eaten upon the grass in open field, and the crumbs are not shaken down upon the spot for their use, there they are sure to leave one of their curses, called the *fair gurtha*, or the hungry-grass; for whoever passes over that particular spot for ever afterwards is liable to be struck down with weakness and hunger; and unless he can taste a morsel of bread he neither will nor can recover. The weakness, in this instance, however, is not natural, for if the person affected but tastes as much meal or flour as would lie on the point of a penknife, he will instantaneously break the spell of the fairies, and recover his former strength. Such spots are said to be generally known by their superior verdure; they are always round, and the diameter of these little circles is seldom more than a single step. The grass which grows upon them is called, as we have said, *hungry-grass*, and is accounted for as we have already stated. Indeed, the walks and haunts of the fairies are to be considered as very sacred and inviolable. For instance it is dangerous to throw out dirty water after dusk, or before sunrise, lest in doing so you bespatter them, on their passage: for these little gentry are peculiarly fond of cleanliness and neatness, both in dress and person. Bishop Andrews' Lamentation for the Fairies gives as humorous and correct a notion of their personal habits in this way, and their disposition to reward cleanliness in servants, as could be written.

We shall ourselves relate a short anecdote or two touching them, before we come to Frank Martin's case; premising to our readers that we could if we wished fill a volume—ay, three of them—with anecdotes and legends connected with our irritable but good-humoured little friends.

Paddy Corcoran's wife was for several years afflicted with a kind of complaint which nobody could properly understand. She was sick, and she was not sick: she was well, and she was not well; she was as

adies wish to be who love their lords, and she was not as such ladies wish to be. In fact nobody could tell what the matter with her was. She had a gnawing at the heart which came heavily upon her husband ; or, with the help of God, a keener appetite than the same gnawing amounted to, could not be met with of a summer's day. The poor woman was delicate beyond belief, and had no appetite at all, so she hadn't, barring a little relish for a mutton-chop, or a 'staik,' or a bit o' mait, anyway ; for sure, God help her ! she hadn't the laist inclination for the dhry pratie, or the dhrop o' sour buttermilk along wid it, especially as she was so poorly : and, indeed, for a woman in her condition—for, sick as she was, poor Paddy always was made to believe her in *that* condition—but God's will be done ! she didn't care. A pratie an' a grain o' salt was a welcome to her—glory be to his name !—as the best roast an' boiled that ever was dressed ; an' why not ? There was one comfort : she wouldn't be long wid him—long throublin' him ; it mattered little what she got ; but sure she knew herself, that from the gnawin' at her heart, she could never do good widout the little bit o' mait now and then ; an', sure, if her own husband begridged it to her, who else had she a betther right to expect it from ?

Well, as we have said, she lay a bedridden invalid for long enough, trying doctors and quacks of all sorts, sexes, and sizes, and all without a farthing's benefit, until, at the long run, poor Paddy was nearly brought to the last pass, in striving to keep her in "the bit o' mait." The seventh year was now on the point of closing, when, one harvest day, as she lay bemoaning her hard condition, on her bed beyond the kitchen fire, a little weeshy woman, dressed in a neat red cloak, comes in, and, sitting down by the hearth, says :—

"Well, Kitty Corcoran, you've had a long lair of it there on the broad o' yer back for seven years, an' you're *jist* as far from bein' cured as ever."

"Mavrone, ay," said the other; "in throth that's what I was this minnit thinkin' ov, and a sorrowful thought it's to me."

"It's yer own fau't, thin," says the little woman; "an', indeed, for that matter, it's yer fau't that ever you wor there at all."

"Arra, how is that?" asked Kitty; "sure I wouldn't be here if I could help it? Do you think it's a comfort or a pleasure to me to be sick and bedridden?"

"No," said the other, "I do not; but I'll tell you the truth: for the last seven years you have been annoyin' us. I am one o' the good people; an' as I have a regard for you, I'm come to let you know the raison why you've been sick so long as you are. For all the time you've been ill, if you'll take the thrubble to remimber, your childhre thrown out yer dirty wather afther dusk an' before sunrise, at the very time we're passin' yer door, which we pass twice a day. Now, if you avoid this, if you throw it out in a different place, an' at a different time, the complaint you have will lave you: so will the gnawin' at the heart; an' you'll be as well as ever you wor. If you don't follow this advice, why, remain as you are, an' all the art o' man can't cure you." She then bade her good-bye, and disappeared.

Kitty, who was glad to be cured on such easy terms, immediately complied with the injunction of the fairy; and the consequence was, that the next day she found herself in as good health as ever she enjoyed during her life.

Lanty M'Clusky had married a wife, and, of course, it was necessary to have a house in which to keep her. Now, Lanty had taken a bit of a farm, about six acres; but as there was no house on it, he resolved to build one; and that it might be as comfortable as possible, he selected for the site of it one of those beautiful green circles that are supposed to be the play-ground of the fairies. Lanty was warned against this; but as he was a headstrong man, and not much given to fear, he said he would not change such a

pleasant situation for his house, to oblige all the families in Europe. He accordingly proceeded with the building, which he finished off very neatly ; and, as it was usual on these occasions to give one's neighbours and friends a house-warming, so, in compliance with his good and pleasant old custom, Lanty having brought home the wife in the course of the day, got a fiddler, and a lot of whiskey, and gave those who had come to see him a dance in the evening. This was all very well, and the fun and hilarity were proceeding briskly, when a noise was heard after night had set in, like a crushing and straining of ribs and rafters on the top of the house. The folks assembled all listened, and, without doubt, there was nothing heard but rushing, and heaving, and pushing, and groaning, and panting, as if a thousand little men were engaged in pulling down the roof.

"Come," said a voice, which spoke in a tone of command, "work hard : you know we must have Lanty's house down before midnight."

This was an unwelcome piece of intelligence to Lanty, who, finding that his enemies were such as he could not cope with, walked out, and addressed them as follows :—

"Gintlemen, I humbly ax yer pardon for buildin' in any place belongin' to you ; but if you'll have the civility to let me alone this night, I'll begin to pull down and remove the house to-morrow morning."

This was followed by a noise like the clapping of a thousand tiny little hands, and a shout of "Bravo, Lanty ! build half way between the two Whitethorns above the boreen ;" and after another hearty little shout of exultation, there was a brisk rushing noise, and they were heard no more.

The story, however, does not end here ; for Lanty, when digging the foundation of his new house, found it full of a *kam** of gold : so that in leaving to the enemies their play-ground, he became a richer man than ever he otherwise would have been, had he never come in contact with them at all.

* *Kam*—a metal vessel in which the peasantry dip rushlights.

There is another instance of their interference mentioned, in which it is difficult to say whether the simplicity or benevolence is the most amusing. In the north of Ireland there are spinning meetings unmarried females frequently held at the houses of farmers, called *kemps*. Every young woman who has got the reputation of being a quick and expert spinner attends where the kemp is to be held, at an hour usually before day-light, and on these occasions she is accompanied by her sweetheart or some male relative who carries her wheel, and conducts her safely across the fields or along the road, as the case may be. The kemp is, indeed, an animated and joyous scene, and one, besides, which is calculated to promote industry and decent pride. Scarcely anything can be more cheering and agreeable than to hear at a distance breaking the silence of morning, the light-hearted voices of many girls either in mirth or song, the humming sound of the busy wheels—jarred upon a little, it is true, by the stridulous noise and chucking of the reels, and the voices of the reelers, as they call aloud the checks, together with the name of the spinner, and the quantity she has spun up to that period; the contest is generally commenced two or three hours before day-break. This mirthful spirit is also sustained by the prospect of a dance—with which, by the way, every kemp closes; and when the fair victor is declared, she is to be looked upon as the queen of the meeting, and treated with the necessary respect.

But to our tale. Every one knew Shaun E. M'Gaveran to be the cleanest, best-conducted boy, and the most industrious too, in the whole parish of Faugh-a-ballagh. Hard was it to find a young fellow who could handle a flail, spade, or reaping-hook in a better style, or who could go through his day's work in a more creditable or workman-like manner. In addition to this, he was a fine, well-built, handsome young man as you could meet in a fair; and so, as *was on it*, maybe the pretty girls weren't likely to let each other's caps about him. Shaun, however,

as prudent as he was good-looking ; and although he wanted a wife, yet the sorrow one of him but preferred taking a well-handed, smart girl, who was known to be well-behaved and industrious, like himself. Here, however, was where the puzzle lay on him ; for instead of one girl of that kind, there were in the neighbourhood no less than a dozen of them— all equally fit and willing to become his wife, and all equally good-looking. There were two, however, whom he thought a trifle above the rest ; but so nicely balanced were Bidy Corrigan and Sally Gorman, that for the life of him he could not make up his mind to decide between them. Each of them had won her kemp ; and it was currently said by them who ought to know, that neither of them could overmatch the other. No two girls in the parish were better respected, or deserved to be so ; and the consequence was, they had every one's good word and good wish. Now, it so happened that Shaun had been pulling a cord with each ; and as he knew not how to decide between, he thought he would allow them to do that themselves if they could. He accordingly gave out to the neighbours that he would hold a kemp on that day week, and he told Bidy and Sally especially that he had made up his mind to marry whichever of them won the kemp, for he knew right well, as did all the parish, that one of them must. The girls agreed to this very good-humouredly, Bidy telling Sally that she (Sally) would surely win it ; and Sally, not to be outdone in civility, telling the same thing to her.

Well, the week was nearly past, there being but two days till that of the kemp, when, about three o'clock, there walks into the house of old Paddy Corrigan, a little woman dressed in high-heeled shoes, and a short, red cloak. There was no one in the house but Bidy, at the time, who rose up and placed a chair near the fire, and asked the little red woman to sit down and rest herself. She accordingly did so, and in a short time a lively chat commenced between them.

"So," said the strange woman, "there's to be a great kemp in Shaun Buie M'Gaveran's?"

"Indeed there is that, good woman," replied Biddy, smiling, and blushing to back of that again, because she knew her own fate depended on it.

"And," continued the little woman, "whoever wins the kemp wins a husband?"

"Ay, so it seems."

"Well, whoever gets Shaun will be a happy woman, for he's the moral of a good boy."

"That's nothing but the truth, anyhow," replied Biddy, sighing, for fear, you may be sure, that she herself might lose him; and, indeed, a young woman might sigh from many a worse reason. "But," said she, changing the subject, "you appear to be tired, honest woman, an' I think you had better eat a bit, an' take a good drink of *buinnhe ramuher* (thick milk) to help you on your journey."

"Thank you kindly, a colleen," said the woman, "I'll take a bit, if you plase, hopin', at the same time, that you wont be the poorer of it this day twelve months."

"Sure," said the girl, "you know that what we give from kindness, ever an' always leaves a blessing behind it."

"Yes, *acushla*, when it is given from kindness."

She accordingly helped herself to the food that Biddy placed before her, and appeared, after eating, to be very much refreshed.

"Now," said she, rising up, "you're a very good girl, an' if you are able to find out my name before Tuesday morning, the kemp-day, I tell you that you'll win it, and gain the husband."

"Why," said Biddy, "I never saw you before. I don't know who you are, nor where you live; how, then, can I ever find out your name?"

"You never saw me before, sure enough," said the old woman, "an' I tell you that you never will see me again but once; an' yet if you have not my name for me at the close of the kemp, you'll lose all, an'

that will leave you a sore heart, for well I know you love Shaun Buie."

So saying, she went away, and left poor Biddy quite cast down at what she had said, for, to tell the truth, she loved Shaun very much, and had no hopes of being able to find out the name of the little woman, on which, it appeared, so much to her depended.

It was very near the same hour of the same day that Sally Gorman was sitting alone in her father's house, thinking of the kemp, when who should walk into her but our friend the little red woman.

"God save you, honest woman," said Sally, "this is a fine day that's in it, the Lord be praised!"

"It is," said the woman, "as fine a day as one could wish for: indeed it is."

"Have you no news on your travels?" asked Sally.

"The only news in the neighbourhood," replied the other, "is this great kemp that's to take place at Shaun Buie M'Gaveran's. They say you're either to win him or lose him then," she added, looking closely at Sally as she spoke.

"I'm not very much afraid of that," said Sally, with confidence; "but even if I do lose him, I may get as good."

"It's not easy gettin' as good," rejoined the old woman, "an' you ought to be very glad to win him, if you can."

"Let me alone for that," said Sally. "Biddy's a good girl, I allow; but as for spinnin', she never saw the day she could leave me behind her. Won't you sit an' rest you?" she added; "maybe you're tired."

"It's time for you to think of it," *thought* the woman, but she spoke nothing: "but," she added, to herself, on reflection, "it's better late than never—I'll sit awhile, till I see a little closer what she's made of."

She accordingly sat down and chatted upon several subjects, such as young women like to talk about, for about half an hour; after which she arose, and taking her little staff in hand, she bade Sally good-bye, and went her way. After passing a little from the house

she looked back, and could not help herself as follows :—

“ She’s smooth and sm.
But she wants the ho
She’s tight and neat,
But she gave no mes

Poor Biddy now made all possible excuses to the old woman, but to no purpose. She spoke to about her had ever seen such a woman. She felt very dispirited at her heart, for there is no doubt that it would have cost her many a pound to get one that she loved so well. At last she came, and with it all the pretty girls of the hood, to Shaun Buie’s. Among the girls were to decide their right to him, the handsomest pair by far, and ever to be seen. To be sure, it was a blythe and not a light laugh and sweet song rang out that day. Biddy and Sally, as they were, were far a-head of the rest, but singing, that the reelers could not declare which was the best. It was a head-and-head between the two, and all who were at the kemp felt that it was the highest pitch of interest and excitement which of them would be successful.

The day was now more than half over, and the difference was between them, when, to the sorrow of every one present, Biddy broke in two, and so to all appearances the contest in favour of her rival ; and to the mortification, she was as ignorant as any woman’s name as ever. What was to be done that could be done was done. It was about fourteen years of age, happened when the accident took place, had no father and mother to bring them

went on between the rival spinsters. Johnny Corrigan was accordingly despatched with all speed to Donnel M'Cusker's, the wheelwright, in order to get the heck mended, that being Biddy's last but hopeless chance. Johnny's anxiety that his sister should win was, of course, very great, and in order to lose as little time as possible he struck across the country, passing through, or rather close by, Kilrudden forth, a place celebrated as a resort of the fairies. What was his astonishment, however, as he passed a white-thorn tree, to hear a female voice singing, in accompaniment to the sound of a spinning-wheel, the following words :—

"There's a girl in this town doesn't know my name;
But my name's Even Trot—Even Trot."

"There's a girl in this town," said the lad, "who's in great distress, for she has broken her heck, and lost a husband. I'm now goin' to Donnel M'Cusker's to get it mended."

"What's her name?" said the little red woman.

"Biddy Corrigan."

The little woman immediately whipped out the heck from her own wheel, and giving it to the boy, desired him to bring it to his sister, and never mind Donnel M'Cusker.

"You have little time to lose," she added, "so go back and give her this; but don't tell her how you got it, nor, above all things, that it was Even Trot that gave it to you."

The lad returned, and after giving the heck to his sister, as a matter of course told her that it was a little red woman called Even Trot that sent it to her, a circumstance which made tears of delight start to Biddy's eyes, for she knew now that Even Trot was the name of the old woman, and having known that, she felt that something good would happen to her. She now resumed her spinning, and never did human fingers let down the thread so rapidly. The whole kemp were amazed at the quantity which from time

to time filled her pirl. The hearts of her friends began to rise, and those of Sally's party to sink, as hour after hour she was fast approaching her rival, who now spun if possible with double speed on finding Biddy coming up with her. At length they were again even, and just at that moment in came her friend the little red woman, and asked aloud, "is there any one in this kemp that knows my name?" This question she asked three times before Biddy could pluck up courage to answer her. She at last said,

"There's a girl in this town *does* know your name—
Your name is Even Trot—Even Trot."

"Ay," said the old woman, "and so it is ; and let that name be your guide and your husband's through life. Go steadily along, but let your step be even ; stop little ; keep always advancing ; and you'll never have cause to rue the day that you first saw Even Trot."

We need scarcely add that Biddy won the kemp and the husband, and that she and Shaun lived long and happily together ; and I have only now to wish, kind reader, that you and I may live longer and more happily still.

FRANK MARTIN

AND

THE FAIRIES.

WHEN a superstition is once impressed strongly upon the popular credulity, the fiction always assumes the shape and form which the peculiar imagination of the country is constituted to body forth. This faculty depends so much on climate, temperament, religion, and occupation, that the notions entertained of supernatural beings, though generally based upon one broad feature peculiar to all countries, differ so essentially respecting the form, character, habits, and powers of these beings, that they appear to have been drawn from sources widely removed. To an inquiring mind there can be no greater proof than this of their being nothing but the creations of our own brain, and of assuming that shape only which has uniformly been impressed upon our imagination at the precise period of life when such impressions are strongest and most permanent, and the reason which ought to combat and investigate them least capable of doing so. If these inane bugbears possessed the consistence of truth and reality, their appearance to mankind would be always uniform, unchangeable, and congruous; but they are beheld, so to speak, through different prejudices and impressions, and consequently change with the media through which they are seen, just as light assumes the hue of the glass through which, it passes. Hence their different shape, character and attributes in different countries, and the

frequent absence of rational analogy with respect to them even in the same.

The force of imagination alone is capable of conjuring up and shaping out that which never had existence, and that too with as much apparent distinctness and truth as if it were real. Go to the lunatic asylum or the mad-house, and there it may be seen all its strong delusion and positive terror.

Before I close this portion of my little disquisition I shall relate an anecdote connected with it, of which I myself was the subject. Some years ago I was seized with typhus fever of so terrific a character, that for a long time I lay in a state hovering between life and death, unconscious as a log, without either hope or fear. At length a crisis came, and, aided by the strong stamina of an unbroken constitution, I began to recover, and every day to regain my consciousness more and more. As yet, however, I was very far from being out of danger, for I felt the malady to be still so fiery and oppressive, that I was not surprised when told that the slightest mistake either in medicine or regimen would have brought on a relapse. At all events, thank God, my recovery advanced; but, at the same time, the society that surrounded me was wild and picturesque in the highest degree. Never indeed was such a combination of the beautiful and hideous seen, unless in the dreams of a feverish brain like mine, or the distorted reason of a madman. At one side of my bed, looking in upon me with a most hellish and satanic leer, was a fiend compared with which the vulgar representations of the devil are comeliness itself, whilst on the other was a female countenance beaming in beauty that was ethereal—angelic. Thus, in fact, was my whole life surrounded; for they stood as thickly as they could, sometimes flitting about and seeming to crush and jostle one another, but never leaving my bed for a moment. Here were deformed features of a dwarf, *there* an angel apparently fresh from heaven; *here* was a gigantic demon with his huge mouth plac-

longitudinally in his face, and his nose across it, whilst the Gorgon-like coxcomb grinned as if he were vain, and had cause to be vain, of his beauty. This fellow annoyed me much, and would, I apprehended, have done me an injury, only for the angel on the other side. He made perpetual attempts to come at me, but was as often repulsed by that seraphic creature. Indeed, I feared none of them so much as I did the Gorgon, who evidently had a design on me, and would have rendered my situation truly pitiable, were it not for the protection of the seraph, who always succeeded in keeping him aloof. At length he made one furious rush as if he meant to pounce upon me, and in self-preservation I threw my right arm to the opposite side, and, grasping the seraph by the nose, I found I had caught my poor old nurse by that useful organ, while she was in the act of offering me a drink. For several days I was in this state, the victim of images produced by disease, and the inflammatory excitement of brain consequent upon it. Gradually, however, they began to disappear, and I felt manifest relief, for they were succeeded by impressions as amusing now as the former had been distressing. I imagined that there was a serious dispute between my right foot and my left, as to which of them was entitled to precedency; and, what was singular, my right leg, thigh, hand, arm and shoulder, most unflinchingly supported the right foot, as did the other limbs the left. The head alone, with an impartiality that did it honour, maintained a strict neutrality. The truth was, I imagined that all my limbs were endowed with a consciousness of individual existence, and I felt quite satisfied that each and all of them possessed the faculty of reason. I have frequently related this anecdote to my friends; but, I know not how it happened, I never could get them to look upon it in any other light than as a specimen of that kind of fiction which is indulgently termed "drawing the long bow." It is, however, as *true as that I now exist*, and relate the fact; and,

what is more, the arguments which I am about to give are substantially the same that were used by the rival claimants and their respective supporters. The discussion, I must observe, was opened by the left foot, as being the discontented party, and, like all discontented parties, its language was so very violent, that, had its opinions prevailed, there is no doubt but they would have succeeded in completely overturning my constitution.

Left foot. Brother (addressing the right with a great show of affection, but at the same time with a spasmodic twitch of strong discontentment in the big toe), Brother I don't know how it is that you have during our whole lives always taken the liberty to consider yourself a better foot than I am ; and I would feel much obliged to you if you would tell me why it is that you claim this superiority over me. Are we not both equal in every thing ?

Right foot. Be quiet, my dear brother. We are equal in every thing, and why, therefore, are you discontented ?

Left foot. Because you presume to consider yourself the better and more useful foot.

Right foot. Let us not dispute, my dear brother each is equally necessary to the other. What could do without *you* ? Nothing, or at least very little ; and what could you do without *me* ? Very little indeed. We were not made to quarrel.

Left foot (very hot). I am not disposed to quarrel but I trust you will admit that I am as good as you every way your equal, and, begad, in many things your superior. Do you hear that ? I am not disposed to quarrel, you rascal, and how dare you say so ?

Here there was a strong sensation among all the right members, who felt themselves insulted through this outrage offered to their chief supporter.

Right foot. Since you choose to insult me without provocation, I must stand upon my right——

Left (shoving off to a distance). RIGHT !—there again, what right have you to be termed "right" as

more than I?—"Bravo!—go it, *Left*; pitch into him; we are equal to him and his," from the friends of the *Left*. The matter was now likely to become serious, and to end in a row.)

"What's the matter there below?" said the Head; "don't be fools, and make yourselves ridiculous. What would either of you be with a crutch or a cork-leg? which is only another name for wooden shoe any day."

Right foot. Since he provokes me, I tell him, that ever since the world began, the prejudice of mankind in all nations has been in favour of the right foot and the right hand. (Strong sensation among the left members). Surely he ought not to be ignorant of the proverb, which says, when a man is peculiarly successful in any thing he undertakes, "that man knew how to go about it—he put the right foot foremost!" (Cheers from the right party).

Left. That's mere special pleading—the right foot there does not mean you, because you happen to be termed such; but it means the foot which, from its position under the circumstances, happens to be the proper one. (Loud applause from the left members).

Right foot. You know you are weak and feeble and awkward when compared to me, and can do little of yourself. (Hurra! that's a poser!)

Left. Why, certainly, I grant I am the gentleman, and that you are very useful to me, you plebeian, ("Bravo!" from the left hand; "ours is the aristocratic side—hear the operatives! Come, hornloof, what have you to say to that?")

Right hand (addressing his opponent). You may be the aristocratic party if you will, but we are the useful. Who are the true defenders of the constitution, you poor sprig of nobility?

Left hand. The heart is with us, the seat and origin of life and power. Can you boast as much? (Loud cheers).

Right foot. Why, have you never heard it said of an excellent and worthy man—a fellow of the right

sort, a trump—as a mark of his sterling qualities, “his heart’s in the *right* place!” How then can it be in the *left*? (Much applause).

Left. Which is an additional proof that mine is *that* place, and not yours. Yes, you rascal, we *have* the heart, and you cannot deny it.

Right. We admit he resides with you, but it is merely because you are the weaker side, and require his protection. The best part of his energies are given to us, and we are satisfied.

Left. You admit, then, that our party keeps yours in power, and why not at once give up your right to precedence?—why not resign?

Right. Let us put it to the vote.

Left. With all my heart.

It was accordingly put to the vote; but on telling the house, it was found that the parties were equal. Both then appealed very strenuously to Mr. Speaker the Head, who, after having heard their respective arguments, shook himself very gravely, and informed them (much after the manner of Sir Roger de Coverley that “much might be said on both sides.” “But on thing,” said he, “I beg both parties to observe, and very seriously to consider. In the first place, there would be none of this nonsense about precedence were it not for the feverish and excited state in which you all happen to be at present. If you have common sense enough to wait until you all get somewhat cooler there is little doubt but you will feel that you cannot do without each other. As for myself, as I said before I give no specific opinion upon disputes which would never have taken place were it not for the heat of feeling which is between you. I know that much might and has been said upon both sides; but as for me, I nod significantly to both parties, and say nothing. One thing, however, I do say, and it is this—take care, you *right foot*, and you, *left foot*, that by pursuing this senseless quarrel too far it may not happen that you will both get stretched and tied up together in a wooden surtout, when precedence will be out of the

question, and nothing but a most pacific stillness shall remain between you for ever. I shake, and have concluded."

Now, seriously, this case, which as an illustration of my argument possesses a good deal of physiological interest, is another key to the absurd doctrine of apparitions. Here was I at the moment strongly and seriously impressed with a belief that a quarrel was taking place between my two feet about the right of going foremost. Nor was this absurdity all. I actually believed for the time that all my limbs were endowed with separate life and reason. And why? All simply because my whole system was in a state of unusually strong excitement, and the nerves and blood stimulated by disease into a state of derangement. Such, in fact, is the condition in which every one must necessarily be who thinks he sees a spirit; and this, which is known to be an undeniable fact, being admitted, it follows of course that the same causes will, other things being alike, produce the same effects. For instance, does not the terror of an apparition occasion a violent and increased action of the heart and vascular system, similar to that of fever? Does not the very hair stand on end, not merely when the imaginary ghost is seen, but when the very apprehension of it is strong? Is not the action of the brain, too, accelerated in proportion to that of the heart, and the nervous system in proportion to that of both? What, then, is this but a fever for the time being, which is attended by the very phantasms the fear of which created it; for in this case it so happens that the cause and effect mutually reproduce each other.

Hibert mentions a case of imagination, which in a man is probably the strongest and most unaccountable on record. It is that of a person—an invalid—who imagined that at a certain hour of the day a carter or drayman came into his bedroom, and uncovering him, inflicted several heavy stripes upon his body with the thong of his whip; and such was the power of fancy here, that the marks of the lash

were visible in black and blue streaks upon his flesh. I am inclined to think, however, that this stands very much in need of confirmation.

I have already mentioned a case of spectral illusion which occurred in my native parish. I speak of Daly's daughter who saw what she imagined to be the ghost of M'Kenna, who had been lost among the mountains. I shall now relate another, connected with the fairies, of which I also was myself an eye-witness. The man's name, I think was Martin, and he followed the thoughtful and somewhat melancholy occupation of a weaver. He was a bachelor, and wrought journey-work in every farmer's house where he could get employment; and notwithstanding his supernatural vision of the fairies, he was considered to be both a quick and an excellent workman. The more sensible of the country people said he was deranged, but the more superstitious of them maintained that he had a *Lianhan Shee*, and saw them against his will. The *Lianhan Shee* is a malignant fairy, which, by a subtle compact made with any one whom it can induce by the fairest promises to enter into, secures a mastery over them by inducing its unhappy victims to violate it; otherwise, it is and must be like the oriental genie, their slave and drudge, to perform such tasks as they wish to impose upon it. It will promise endless wealth to those whom it is anxious to subjugate to its authority, but it is at once so malignant and ingenious, that the party entering into the contract with it is always certain by its manœuvres to break through his engagement, and thus become slave in his turn. Such is the nature of this wild and fearful superstition, which I think is fast disappearing, and is but rarely known in the country.

Martin was a thin pale man, when I saw him, of a sickly look, and a constitution naturally feeble. His hair was a light auburn, his beard mostly unshaven, and his hands of a singular delicacy and whiteness, owing, I dare say, as much to the soft and easy nature of his employment, as to his infirm health. In every-

thing else he was as sensible, sober, and rational as any other man ; but on the topic of fairies, the man's mania was peculiarly strong and immovable. Indeed, I remember that the expression of his eyes was singularly wild and hollow, and his long narrow temples sallow and emaciated.

Now, this man did not lead an unhappy life, nor did the malady he laboured under seem to be productive of either pain or terror to him, although one might be apt to imagine otherwise. On the contrary, he and the fairies maintained the most friendly intimacy, and their dialogues—which I fear were woefully one-sided ones—must have been a source of great pleasure to him, for they were conducted with much mirth and laughter, on his part at least.

"Well, Frank, when did you see the fairies?"

"Whist! there's two dozen of them in the shop (the weaving shop) this minute. There's a little ould fellow sittin' on the top of the sleys, an' all to be rocked while I'm weavin'. The sorrow's in them, but they're the greatest little skamers alive, so they are. See, there's another of them at my dressin' noggin.* Go out o' that, you *shingawn*; or, bad cess to me, if you don't, but I'll lave you a mark. Ha! cut, you thief you!"

"Frank, arn't you afeard o' them?"

"Is it me! Arra, what ud' I be afeard o' them for? Sure they have no power over me."

"And why haven't they Frank?"

"Because I was baptized against them."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, the priest that christened me was tould by my father, to put in the prayer against the fairies—an' a priest can't refuse it when he's axed—an' he did so. Begorra, it's well for me that he did—(let the tallow alone, you little glutton—see, there's a weeny thief o' them aitin' my tallow)—because, you

* The dressings are a species of sisy flummery, which is brushed into the yarn to keep the thread round and even, and to prevent it from being frayed by the friction of the reed.

see, it was their intention to make me king o' the fairies."

"Is it possible?"

"Devil a lie in it. Sure you may ax them, an' they'll tell you."

"What size are they, Frank?"

"Oh, little we fellows, with green coats, an' the purtiest little shoes ever you seen. There's two o' them—both ould acquaintances o' mine—runnin' along the yarn-beam. That ould fellow with the bob-wig is called Jim Jam, an' the other chap with the three-cocked hat is called Nickey Nick. Nickey plays the pipes. Nickey, give us a tune, or I'll malivogue you—come now, 'Lough Erne Shore.' Whist, now—listen!"

The poor fellow, though weaving as fast as he could all the time, yet bestowed every possible mark of attention to the music, and seemed to enjoy it as much as if it had been real.

But who can tell whether that which we look upon as a privation may not after all be a fountain of increased happiness, greater perhaps than any which we ourselves enjoy? I forget who the poet is who says—

"Mysterious are thy laws;
The vision's finer than the view;
Her landscape Nature never drew
So fair as Fancy draws."

Many a time, when a mere child not more than six or seven years of age, have I gone as far as Frank's weaving-shop, in order, with a heart divided between curiosity and fear, to listen to his conversation with the good people. From morning till night his tongue was going almost as incessantly as his shuttle; and it was well known that at night, whenever he awoke out of his sleep, the first thing he did was to put out his hand and push them as it were off his bed.

"Go out o' this, you thieves you—go out o' this, now, an' let me alone. Nickey, is this any time to be *playing the pipes*, and me wants to sleep? Go off,

now—troth if yez do, you'll see what I'll give yez to-morrow. Sure I'll be makin' new dressin's; and if yez behave dacently, maybe I'll lave yez the scrapin' o' the pot. There now. Och! poor things, they're dacent crathurs. Sure they're all gone barrin' poor Red-cap, that doesn't like to lave me." And then the harmless monomaniac would fall back into what we trust was an innocent slumber.

About this time there was said to have occurred a very remarkable circumstance, which gave poor Frank a vast deal of importance among the neighbours. A man named Frank Thomas, the same in whose house Mickey M'Rorey held the first dance at which I ever saw him, as detailed in a former sketch; this man, I say, had a child sick, but of what complaint I cannot now remember, nor is it of any importance. One of the gables of Thomas's house was built against, or rather into, a Forth or Rath, called Towny, or properly Tonagh Forth. It was said to be haunted by the fairies, and what gave it a character peculiarly wild in my eyes, was, that there were on the southern side of it two or three little green mounds, which were said to be the graves of unchristened children, over which it was considered dangerous and unlucky to pass. At all events, the season was mid-summer; and one evening about dusk, during the illness of the child, the noise of a hand-saw was heard upon the Forth. This was considered rather strange, and after a little time, a few of those who were assembled at Frank Thomas's, went to see who it could be that was sawing in such a place, or what they could be sawing at so late an hour, for every one knew that nobody in the whole country about them would dare to cut down the few white-thorns that grew upon the Forth. On going to examine, however, judge of their surprise, when, after surrounding and searching the whole place, they could discover no trace of either saw or sawyer. In fact, with the exception of themselves, there was no one, either natural or supernatural, visible. They then returned

to the house, and had scarcely sat down, when it was heard again within ten yards of them. Another examination of the premises took place, but with equal success. Now, however, while standing on the Forth, they heard the sawing in a little hollow, about a hundred and fifty yards below them, which was completely exposed to their view, but they could see nobody. A party of them immediately went down to ascertain, if possible, what this singular noise and invisible labour could mean ; but on arriving at the spot, they heard the sawing, to which were now added hammering and the driving of nails upon the Forth above, whilst those who stood on the Forth continued to hear it in the hollow. On comparing notes, they resolved to send down to Billy Nelson's for Frank Martin, a distance of only about eighty or ninety yards. He was soon on the spot, and without a moment's hesitation solved the enigma.

" 'Tis the fairies," said he. "I see them, and busy crathurs they are."

"But what are they sawing, Frank?"

"They are makin' a child's coffin," he replied ; "they have the body already made, an' they're now nailin' the lid together."

That night the child certainly died, and the story goes that on the second evening afterwards, the carpenter who was called upon to make the coffin, brought a table out from Thomas's house to the Forth, as a temporary bench ; and it is said, that the sawing and hammering necessary for the completion of his task, were precisely the same which had been heard the evening but one before—neither more nor less. I remember the death of the child myself, and the making of its coffin, but I think the story of the supernatural carpenter was not heard in the village for some months after its interment.

Frank had every appearance of a hypochondriac about him. At the time I saw him, he might be about thirty-four years of age, but I do not think, *from the debility of his frame and infirm health that*

he has been alive for several years. He was an object of considerable interest and curiosity, and often have I been present when he was pointed out to strangers as "the man that could see the good people." With respect to his solution of the supernatural noise, that is easily accounted for. This superstition of the coffin-making is a common one, and to a man like him, whose mind was familiar with it, the illness of the child would naturally suggest the probability of its death, which he immediately associated with the imagery and agents to be found in his unhappy malady.

A LEGEND OF KNOCKMANY.

WHAT Irish man, woman, or child, has not heard of our renowned Hibernian Hercules, the great and glorious Fin M'Coul? Not one, from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway, nor from that back again to Cape Clear. And, by-the-way, speaking of the Giant's Causeway brings me at once to the beginning of my story. Well, it so happened that Fin and his gigantic relatives were all working at the Causeway, in order to make a bridge, or what was still better, a good stout pad-road, across to Scotland; when Fin, who was very fond of his wife Oonagh, took it into his head that he would go home and see how the poor woman got on in his absence. To be sure, Fin was a true Irishman, and so the sorrow thing in life brought him back, only to see that she was snug and comfortable, and, above all things, that she got her rest well at night; for he knew that the poor woman, when he was with her, used to be subject to nightly qualms and configurations, that kept him very anxious, decent man, striving to keep her up to the good spirits and health that she had when they were first married. So, accordingly, he pulled up a fir-tree, and, after lopping off the roots and branches, made a walking-stick of it, and set out on his way to Oonagh.

Oonagh, or rather Fin, lived at this time on the very tip-top of Knockmany Hill, which faces a cousin of its own called Cullamore, that rises up, half-hill, half-mountain, on the opposite side—east-east by south, as the sailors say, when they wish to puzzle a landsman.

Now, the truth is, for it must come out, that honest Fin's affection for his wife, though cordial enough in *itself*, was by no manner or means the real cause of

his journey home. There was at that time another giant, named Cucullin—some say he was Irish, and some say he was Scotch—but whether Scotch or Irish, sorrow doubt of it but he was a *targer*. No other giant of the day could stand before him; and such was his strength, that, when well vexed, he could give a stamp that shook the country about him.* The fame and name of him went far and near; and nothing in the shape of a man, it was said, had any chance with him in a fight. Whether the story is true or not, I cannot say, but the report went that, by one blow of his fists he flattened a thunderbolt, and kept it in his pocket, in the shape of a pancake, to show to all his enemies, when they were about to fight him. Undoubtedly he had given every giant in Ireland a considerable beating, barring Fin M'Coul himself; and he swore, by the solemn contents of Moll Kelly's Primer, that he would never rest, night or day, winter or summer, till he would serve Fin with the same sauce, if he could catch him. Fin, however, who no doubt was the cock of the walk on his own dunghill, had a strong disinclination to meet a giant who could make a young earthquake, or flatten a thunderbolt when he was angry; so he accordingly kept dodging about from place to place,

* The subjoined note by the Messrs. Chambers, in whose admirable Journal the above Legend appeared, exhibits a most extraordinary coincidence between my illustration of Cucullin's strength and that of the giant alluded to by the Messrs. Chambers:—

"The above paper gives a good idea of the strange hues which the national humour and fancy have thrown over most of the early popular legends of Ireland. Fin or Fion M'Coul is the same half-mythic being who figures as Fingal in Macpherson's Ossian's Poema. He was probably a distinguished warrior in some early stage of the history of Ireland; different authorities place him in the fifth and the ninth centuries. Whatever his real age, and whatever his real qualities, he was afterwards looked back to as a giant of immense size and strength, and became the subject of numerous wild and warlike legends both in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland. Our Lowland poets of the middle ages give incontestible evidence of the great fame then enjoyed by both Fingal and Gaul the son of Morni. Barbour, for instance, in 1375, represents his hero, Robert Bruce, as making allusion to these two personages at the skirmish in Glendochart. Gavin Douglas, who died in 1522, introduces their names into his poem *the Palace of Honour*:

"Great Gow MacMorn, and Fin MacCowl, and how
They should be gods in Ireland, as they say."

not much to his credit as a Trojan, to be sure, whenever he happened to get the hard word that Cucullin was on the scent of him. This, then, was the marrow of the whole movement, although he put it on his anxiety to see Oonagh ; and I am not saying but there was some truth in that too. However, the short and the long of it was, with reverence be it spoken, that he heard Cucullin was coming to the Causeway to have a trial of strength with him ; and he was naturally enough seized, in consequence, with a very warm and sudden fit of affection for his wife, poor woman, who was delicate in her health, and leading, besides, a very lonely uncomfortable life of it (he assured them), in his absence. He accordingly pulled up the fir-tree, as I said before, and having *snedded* it into a walking-stick, set out on his affectionate travels to see his darling Oonagh on the top of Knockmany, by the way.

"Another Scottish poem, of obscure authorship, but of the same age as the above, entitled *An Interlude of the Drotch's* [Dwarf's] *Part of the Play*, conveys the extravagant popular notions of the day respecting the vast stature of not only Fin and Gaul, but of Fin's wife. Of Fin it says—

"Ay when he danced, the warld wad shog—
* * * * *

—After he grew mickle at fouth,
Eleven mile wide was his mouth,
His teeth were ten miles square :
He wad upon his taes stand,
And tak the sterns down with his hand,
And set them in a gold garland,
Above his wife's hair.'

"Of the wife it may be enough to say—

"'For cauld she took the fever-tertan,*
For all the claith in France and Bertan†
Wad not be till her leg a garten,
Though she was young and tender.'

"In Irish traditionary narrative, as appears from Mr. Carleton's present sketch, Fin and his dame are kept within something comparatively moderate as respects bulk and strength, at the same time that enough of the giant is retained to contrast ludicrously with the modern and natural feelings assigned to them, and the motives and maxims on which they and their enemy Cucullin are represented as acting."

* Tertian fever.

† Britain.

In truth, to state the suspicions of the country at the time, the people wondered very much why it was that Fin selected such a windy spot for his dwelling-house, and they even went so far as to tell him as much.

"What can you mane, Mr. M'Coul," said they, "by pitching your tent upon the top of Knockmany, where you never are without a breeze, day or night, winter or summer, and where you're often forced to take your nightcap* without either going to bed or turning up your little finger; ay, an' where, besides this, there's the sorrow's own want of water?"

"Why," said Fin, "ever since I was the height of a round tower, I was known to be fond of having a good prospect of my own; and where the dickens, neighbours, could I find a better spot for a good prospect than the top of Knockmany? As for water, I am sinking a pump,† and, plase goodness, as soon as the Causeway's made, I intend to finish it."

Now, this was more of Fin's philosophy; for the real state of the case was, that he pitched upon the top of Knockmany in order that he might be able to see Cucullin coming towards the house, and, of course, that he himself might go to look after his distant transactions in other parts of the country, rather than—but no matter—we do not wish to be too hard on Fin. All we have to say is, that if he wanted a spot from which to keep a sharp look-out—and, between ourselves, he did want it grievously—barring Slieve Croob, or Slieve Donard, or its own cousin, Cullamore, he could not find a neater or more convenient situation for it in the sweet and sagacious province of Ulster.

"God save all here!" said Fin, good humouredly, on putting his honest face into his own door.

"Musha Fin, avick, an' you're welcome home to

* A common name for the cloud or rack that hangs, as a forerunner of wet weather, about the peak of a mountain.

† There is upon the top of this hill an opening that bears a very strong resemblance to the crater of an extinct volcano. There is also a stone, upon which, I have heard the Rev. Sidney Smith, F. T. C., now rector of the adjoining parish, say that he found Ogham characters; and, if I do not mistake, I think he took a *fac-simile* of them.

your own Oonagh, you darlin' bully." Here followed a smack that is said to have made the waters of the lake at the bottom of the hill curl, as it were, with kindness and sympathy.

"Faith," said Fin, "beautiful; an' how are you, Oonagh—and how did you sport your figure during my absence, my bilberry?"

"Never a merrier—as bouncing a grass widow as ever there was in sweet 'Tyrone among the bushes."

Fin gave a short good-humoured cough, and laughed most heartily, to show her how much he was delighted that she made herself happy in his absence.

"An' what brought you home so soon, Fin?" said she.

"Why, avourneen," said Fin, putting in his answer in the proper way, "never the thing but the purest of love and affection for yourself. Sure you know that's truth, anyhow, Oonagh."

Fin spent two or three happy days with Oonagh, and felt himself very comfortable, considering the dread he had of Cucullin. This, however, grew upon him so much that his wife could not but perceive that something lay on his mind which he kept altogether to himself. Let a woman alone, in the meantime, for ferreting or wheedling a secret out of her good man, when she wishes. Fin was a proof of this.

"It's this Cucullin," said he, "that's troubling me. When the fellow gets angry, and begins to stamp, he'll shake you a whole townland; and it's well known that he can stop a thunderbolt, for he always carries one about him in the shape of a pancake, to show to anyone that might misdoubt it."

As he spoke, he clapped his thumb in his mouth, which he always did when he wanted to prophesy, or to know anything that happened in his absence; and the wife, who knew what he did it for, said, very sweetly,

"Fin, darling, I hope you don't bite your thumb at me, dear?"

"No," said Fin; "but I bite my thumb, acushla," said he.

"Yes, jewel ; but take care and don't draw blood," said she. "Ah, Fin ! don't, my bully—don't."

"He's coming," said Fin ; "I see him below Dunggannon."

"Thank goodness, dear ! an' who is it, avick ? Glory be to God !"

"That baste, Cucullin," replied Fin ; "and how to manage I don't know. If I run away, I am disgraced ; and I know that sooner or later I must meet him, for my thumb tells me so."

"When will he be here ?" said she.

"Tomorrow, about two o'clock," replied Fin, with a groan.

"Well, my bully, don't be cast down," said Oonagh ; "depend on me, and maybe I'll bring you better out of this scrape than ever you could bring yourself, by your rule o' thumb."

This quieted Fin's heart very much, for he knew that Oonagh was hand and glove with the fairies ; and, indeed, to tell the truth, she was supposed to be a fairy herself. If she was, however, she must have been a kind-hearted one ; for, by all accounts, she never did anything but good in the neighbourhood.

Now it so happened that Oonagh had a sister named Granua, living opposite them, on the very top of Cullamore, which I have mentioned already, and this Granua was quite as powerful as herself. The beautiful valley that lies between them is not more than about three or four miles broad, so that of a summer's evening, Granua and Oonagh were able to hold many an agreeable conversation across it, from the one hill top to the other. Upon this occasion, Oonagh resolved to consult her sister as to what was best to be done in the difficulty that surrounded them.

"Granua," said she, "are you at home ?"

"No," said the other ; "I'm picking bilberries in Althadhawan" (*Anglicé*, the Devil's Glen).

"Well," said Oonah, "get up to the top of Cullamore, look about you, and then tell us what you see."

"Very well," replied Granua, after a few minutes "I am there now."

"What do you see?" asked the other.

"Goodness be about us!" exclaimed Granua, "I see the biggest giant that ever was known, coming up from Dungannon."

"Ay," said Oonagh, "there's our difficulty. That giant is the great Cucullin; and he's now commin' up to leather Fin. What's to be done?"

"I'll call to him," she replied, "to come up to Cullamore, and refresh himself, and may be that will give you and Fin time to think of some plan to get yourselves out of the scrape. But," she proceeded, "I'm short of butter, having in the house only half a dozen firkins, and as I'm to have a few giants and giantesses to spend the evenin' with me, I'd feel thankful, Oonagh, if you'd throw me up fifteen or sixteen tubs, or the largest miscaun you have got, and you'll oblige me very much."

"I'll do that with a heart and a half," replied Oonagh; "and indeed, Granua, I feel myself under great obligations to you for your kindness in keeping him off of us till we see what can be done; for what would become of us all if anything happened Fin poor man?"

She accordingly got the largest miscaun of butter she had—which might be about the weight of a couple a dozen millstones, so that you may easily judge of its size—and calling up to her sister, "Granua," said she, "are you ready? I'm going to throw you up a miscaun, so be prepared to catch it."

"I will," said the other; "a good throw now, and take care it does not fall short."

Oonagh threw it; but in consequence of her anxiety about Fin and Cucullin, she forgot to say the charm that was to send it up, so that, instead of reaching Cullamore, as she expected, it fell about half way between the two hills, at the edge of the Broad Bog near Augher.

"My curse upon you!" she exclaimed; "you've disgraced me. I now change you into a grey stone. *Lie there as a testimony of what has happened; and*

may evil betide the first living man that will ever attempt to remove or injure you !”

And, sure enough, there it lies to this day, with the mark of the four fingers and thumb imprinted in it, exactly as it came out of her hand.

“Never mind,” said Granua ; “I must only do the best I can with Cucullin. If all fail, I’ll give him a cast of heather broth to keep the wind out of his stomach, or a panada of oak-bark to draw it in a bit ; but, above all things, think of some plan to get Fin out of the scrape he’s in, otherwise he’s a lost man. You know you used to be sharp and ready-witted ; and my own opinion, Oonagh, is, that it will go hard with you, of you’ll outdo Cucullin yet.”

She then made a high smoke on the top of the hill, after which she put her finger in her mouth, and gave three whistles, and by that Cucullin knew he was invited to Cullamore—for this was the way that the Irish long ago gave a sign to all strangers and travellers, to let them know they were welcome to come and take share of whatever was going.

In the meantime, Fin was very melancholy, and did not know what to do, or how to act at all. Cucullin was an ugly customer, no doubt, to meet with ; and, moreover, the idea of the confounded “cake” aforesaid, flattened the very heart within him. What chance could he have, strong and brave though he was, with a man who could, when put into a passion, walk the country into earthquakes and knock thunderbolts into pancakes ? The thing was impossible ; and Fin knew not on what hand to turn him. Right or left—backward or forward—where to go he could form no guess whatsoever.

“Oonagh,” said he, “can you do nothing for me ? Where’s all your invention ? Am I to be skivered like a rabbit before your eyes, and to have my name disgraced for ever in the sight of all my tribe, and me the best man among them ? How am I to fight this man-mountain—this huge cross between an earthquake and a thunderbolt ?—with a pancake in his pocket that was once”——

"Be easy, Fin," replied Oonagh; "troth, I'm ashamed of you. Keep your toe in your pump, will you? Talking of pancakes, maybe we'll give him as good as any he brings with him—thunderbolt or otherwise. If I don't treat him to as smart feeding as he's got this many a day, never trust Oonagh again. Leave him to me, and do just as I bid you."

This relieved Fin very much; for, after all, he had great confidence in his wife, knowing, as he did, that she had got him out of many a quandary before. The present, however, was the greatest of all; but still he began to get courage, and was able to eat his victuals as usual. Oonagh then drew the nine woollen threads of different colours, which she always did to find out the best way of succeeding in any thing of importance she went about. She then platted them into three plats with three colours in each, putting one on her right arm, one round her heart, and the third round her right ankle, for then she knew that nothing could fail with her that she undertook.

Having everything now prepared, she sent round to the neighbours and borrowed one-and-twenty iron griddles, which she took and kneaded into the hearts of one-and-twenty cakes of bread, and these she baked on the fire in the usual way, setting them aside in the cupboard according as they were done. She then put down a large pot of new milk, which she made into curds and whey, and gave Fin due instructions how to use the curds when Cucullin should come. Having done all this, she sat down quite contented, waiting for his arrival on the next day about two o'clock, that being the hour at which he was expected—for Fin knew as much by the sucking of his thumb. Now, this was a curious property that Fin's thumb had; but, notwithstanding all the wisdom and logic he used to suck out of it, it could never have stood to him here were it not for the wit of his wife. In this very thing, moreover, he was very much resembled by his *great foe* Cucullin; for it was well known that the *huge strength* he possessed all lay in the middle finger

of his right hand, and that, if he happened by any mischance to lose it, he was no more, notwithstanding his bulk, than a common man.

At length, the next day, he was seen coming across the valley, and Oonagh knew that it was time to commence operations. She immediately made the cradle, and desired Fin to lie down in it, and cover himself up with the clothes.

"You must pass for your own child," said she ; "so just lie there snug, and say nothing, but be guided by me." This, to be sure, was wormwood to Fin—I mean going into the cradle in such a cowardly manner—but he knew Oonagh well ; and finding that he had nothing else for it, with a very rueful face he gathered himself into it, and lay snug as she had desired him.

About two o'clock, as he had been expected, Cucullin came in. "God save all here !" said he ; "is this where the great Fin M'Coul lives ?"

"Indeed it is, honest man," replied Oonagh ; "God save you kindly—won't you be sitting ?"

"Thank you, ma'am," says he, sitting down ; "you're Mrs. M'Coul, I suppose ?"

"I am," said she ; "and I have no reason, I hope, to be ashamed of my husband."

"No," said the other ; "he has the name of being the strongest and bravest man in Ireland ; but for all that, there's a man not far from you that's very desirous of taking a shake with him. Is he at home ?"

"Why, then, no," she replied ; "and if ever a man left his house in a fury, he did. It appears that some one told him of a big basthoon of a giant called Cucullin being down at the Causeway to look for him, and so he set out there to try if he could catch him. Troth, I hope, for the poor giant's sake, he won't meet with him, for if he does, Fin will make paste of him at once."

"Well," said the other, "I am Cucullin, and I have been seeking him these twelve months, but he always kept clear of me ; and I will never rest night or day *till I lay my hands on him.*"

At this Oonagh set up a loud laugh, of great contempt, by the way, and looked at him as if he was only a mere handful of a man.

"Did you ever see Fin?" said she, changing her manner all at once.

"How could I?" said he; "he always took care to keep his distance."

"I thought so," she replied; "I judged as much; and if you take my advice, you poor-looking creature, you'll pray night and day that you may never see him, for I tell you it will be a black day for you when you do. But, in the mean time, you perceive that the wind's on the door, and as Fin himself is from home, maybe you'd be civil enough to turn the house, for it's always what Fin does when he's here."

This was a startler even to Cucullin; but he got up, however, and after pulling the middle finger of his right hand until it cracked three times, he went outside, and getting his arms about the house, completely turned it as she had wished. When Fin saw this, he felt a certain description of moisture, which shall be nameless, oozing out through every pore of his skin; but Oonagh, depending upon her woman's wit, felt not a whit daunted.

"Arrah, then," said she, "as you are so civil, maybe you'd do another obliging turn for us, as Fin's not here to do it himself. You see, after this long stretch of dry weather we've had, we feel very badly off for want of water. Now, Fin says there's a fine spring-well somewhere under the rocks behind the hill here below, and it was his intention to pull them asunder; but having heard of you, he left the place in such a fury, that he never thought of it. Now, if you try to find it, troth I'd feel it a kindness."

She then brought Cucullin down to see the place, which was then all one solid rock; and, after looking at it for some time, he cracked his right middle finger nine times, and, stooping down, tore a cleft about four hundred feet deep, and a quarter of a mile in length, *which has since been christened by the name of Lunn-*

ford's Glen. This feat nearly threw Oonagh herself off her guard ; but what won't a woman's sagacity and presence of mind accomplish ?

" You'll now come in," said she, " and eat a bit of such humble fare as we can give you. Fin, even although he and you are enemies, would scorn not to treat you kindly in his own house ; and, indeed, if I didn't do it even in his absence, he would not be pleased with me."

She accordingly brought him in, and placing half a dozen of the cakes we spoke of before him, together with a can or two of butter, a side of boiled bacon, and a stack of cabbage, she desired him to help himself—for this, be it known, was long before the invention of potatoes. Cucullin, who, by the way, was a glutton as well as a hero, put one of the cakes in his mouth to take a huge whack out of it, when both Fin and Oonagh were stunned with a noise that resembled something between a growl and a yell. " Blood and fury !" he shouted ; " how is this ? Here are two of my teeth out ! What kind of bread is this you gave me ?"

" What's the matter ?" said Oonagh coolly.

" Matter !" shouted the other again ; " why, here are the two best teeth in my head gone."

" Why," said she, " that's Fin's bread—the only bread he ever eats when at home ; but, indeed, I forgot to tell you that nobody can eat it but himself, and that child in the cradle there. I thought, however, that, as you were reported to be rather a stout little fellow of your size, you might be able to manage it, and I did not wish to affront a man that thinks himself able to fight Fin. Here's another cake—maybe it's not so hard as that."

Cucullin at the moment was not only hungry, but ravenous, so he accordingly made a fresh set at the second cake, and immediately another yell was heard twice as loud as the first. " Thunder and giblets !" he roared, " take your bread out of this, or I will not have a tooth in my head ; there's another pair of them gone !"

"Well, honest man," replied Oonagh, "if you're not able to eat the bread, say so quietly, and don't be wakening the child in the cradle there. There now, he's awake upon me."

Fin now gave a skirl that startled the giant, as coming from such a youngster as he was represented to be. "Mother," said he, "I'm hungry—get me something to eat." Oonagh went over, and putting into his hand a cake *that had no griddle in it*, Fin, whose appetite in the meantime was sharpened by what he saw going forward, soon made it disappear. Cucullin was thunderstruck, and secretly thanked his stars that he had the good fortune to miss meeting Fin, for, as he said to himself, I'd have no chance with a man who could eat such bread as that, which even his son that's but in his cradle can munch before my eyes.

"I'd like to take a glimpse at the lad in the cradle," said he to Oonagh; "for I can tell you that the infant who can manage that nutriment, is no joke to look at, or to feed of a scarce summer."

"With all the veins of my heart," replied Oonagh; "Get up, acushla, and show this decent little man something that won't be unworthy of your father, Fin M'Coul."

Fin, who was dressed for the occasion as much like a boy as possible, got up, and bringing Cucullin out—"Are you strong?" said he.

"Thunder an' ounds!" exclaimed the other, "what a voice in so small a chap!"

"Are you strong?" said Fin again; "are you able to squeeze water out of that white stone?" he asked, putting one into Cucullin's hand. The latter squeezed and squeezed the stone, but to no purpose; he might pull the rocks of Lumford's Glen asunder, and flatten a thunderbolt, but to squeeze water out of a white stone was beyond his strength. Fin eyed him with great contempt, as he kept straining and squeezing and squeezing and straining, till he got black in the face with the efforts.

"Ah, you're a poor creature!" said Fin. "You a

giant ! Give me the stone here, and when I'll show what Fin's little son can do, you may then judge of what my daddy himself is."

Fin then took the stone, and slyly exchanging it for the curds, he squeezed the latter until the whey, as clear as water, oozed out in a little shower from his hand.

"I'll now go in," said he, "to my cradle ; for I scorn to lose my time with any one that's not able to eat my daddy's bread, or squeeze water out of a stone. Bedad, you had better be off out of this before he comes back ; for if he catches you, it's in flummery he'd have you in two minutes."

Cucullin, seeing what he had seen, was of the same opinion himself ; his knees knocked together with the terror of Fin's return, and he accordingly hastened in to bid Oonagh farewell, and to assure her, that from that day out, he never wished to hear of, much less to see, her husband. "I admit fairly that I'm not a match for him," said he, "strong as I am ; tell him I will avoid him as I would the plague, and that I will make myself scarce in this part of the country while I live."

Fin, in the mean time, had gone into the cradle, where he lay very quietly, his heart at his mouth with delight that Cucullin was about to take his departure, without discovering the tricks that had been played off on him.

"It's well for you," said Oonagh, "that he doesn't happen to be here, for it's nothing but hawk's meat he'd make of you."

"I know that," says Cucullin, ; "Divil a thing else he'd make of me ; but before I go, will you let me feel what kind of teeth they are that can eat griddle-bread like *that* ?"—and he pointed to it as he spoke.

"With all pleasure in life," said she ; "only, as they're far back in his head, you must put your finger a good way in."

Cucullin was surprised to find such a powerful set of grinders in one so young ; but he was still much

more so on finding, when he took his hand from Fin's mouth, that he had left the very finger upon which his whole strength depended, behind him. He gave one loud groan, and fell down at once with terror and weakness. This was all Fin wanted, who now knew that his most powerful and bitterest enemy was completely at his mercy. He instantly started out of the cradle, and in a few minutes the great Cucullin, that was for such a length of time the terror of him and all his followers, lay a corpse before him. Thus did Fin, through the wit and invention of Oonagh, his wife, succeed in overcoming his enemy by stratagem, which he never could have done by force : and thus also is it proved that the women, if they bring us *into* many an unpleasant scrape, can sometimes succeed in getting us *out* of others that are as bad.*

* Of the grey stone mentioned in this legend, there is a very striking and melancholy anecdote to be told. Some twelve or thirteen years ago, a gentleman in the vicinity of the site of it was building a house, and, in defiance of the legend and curse connected with it, he resolved to break it up and use it. It was with some difficulty, however, that he could succeed in getting his labourers to have any thing to do with its mutilation. Two men, however, undertook to blast it, but, somehow, the process of ignition being mismanaged, it exploded prematurely, and one of them was killed. This coincidence was held as a fulfilment of the curse mentioned in the legend. I have heard that it remains in that mutilated state to the present day, no other person being found who had the hardihood to touch it. This stone, before it was disfigured, exactly resembled that which the country people term a *miscaun* of butter, which is precisely the shape of a complete prism, a circumstance, no doubt, which, in the fertile imagination of the old Senachies, gave rise to the superstition annexed to it.

It may be mentioned that, in the Interlude of the Droich's Part of the Play, above quoted, the wife of Fin M'Coul is represented as the originator of a much larger mass of rock than the *grey stone*—namely, the basaltic hill of Craigforth, near Stirling.

THE END.





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